

# New Testament Followers of Jesus

By

WALTER ALBION SQUIRES, B. D.

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The Westminster Textbooks of Religious Education  
Intermediate Department, Second Year, Part I



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Jesus











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WALTER ALBION SQUIRES, B.D.

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The Westminster Textbooks of Religious Education  
for Church Schools Having Sunday, Week  
Day, and Expressional Sessions

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# Preface

## GENERAL PLAN OF THE WESTMINSTER TEXT-BOOKS OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The Westminster Textbooks of Religious Education aim to unify the educational program of the individual church by furnishing a graded course of study suitable for Sunday-school classes, week-day church-school classes, and expressional organizations. The lessons are so constructed as to make the Sunday sessions largely devotional and the week-day sessions largely informational. Suggestions are given for an expressional meeting in which pupils discuss the application of the truths they have learned to their own life problems. In these meetings they also plan for various forms of Christian service without which mere information and formal devotion are devoid of any great religious value.

Churches planning to use these textbooks will need to provide for one hour of religious instruction on week days, in addition to their usual program. In the Primary, Junior, and Intermediate Departments of the Sunday school, the Westminster Textbooks will replace the lesson materials heretofore in use. The expressional work of the Westminster Textbooks will supplant the usual topics in the Junior and Intermediate Christian Endeavor Societies, or new expressional organizations will be formed to have charge of this phase of the educational task of the church.

The lessons in this series of textbooks may be used in week-day classes independently of the Sunday school, by taking the lessons consecutively in the week-day meetings. In this case, however, there will be no correlated and unified program for the educational activities of the church.

In carrying out the plan it is desirable that, so far as possible, the same teachers be in charge in all three sessions of the church school. Where this is not possible,

there should be one efficient supervisory Board or Council of Religious Education and an efficient superintendent for the whole program.

Many of the missionary stories in this volume are adapted from George H. Trull's little volume entitled "Missionary Programs and Incidents." A few are also taken from Basil Matthew's "The Book of Missionary Heroes."

## SUGGESTIONS CONCERNING THE GOAL OF THE LESSONS IN THIS VOLUME

Teachers in the Intermediate Department of the church school are face to face with a great opportunity. At the age of twelve or thirteen, young people begin to be peculiarly responsive to the Christian religion. The time is drawing near when most of them will make a life decision for or against the religious life, if they have not already done so. An adolescent religious awakening is entirely normal for young people of Intermediate age. Without wise guidance and careful nurture this religious tendency of the young life is apt to be but a feeble and transient spiritual phenomenon. Under the guidance of wise and consecrated parents and teachers the religious awakening of the youthful soul becomes a permanent and compelling influence dominating the whole personality of its possessor.

This book contains material fitted for use in Intermediate classes, for it deals with the heroic men and women who laid the foundations of the Christian Church. The heart of youth responds to these heroic lives when they are presented by a skilled and enthusiastic teacher. It is the goal of the lessons in this volume to bring pupils to a decision for the Christian life and to a deep and lasting respect for the Church which Jesus established in the world to be his agency for setting up the Kingdom of God.

## SUGGESTIONS CONCERNING THE WEEK DAY SESSION

The week-day session is intended to be the main instructional period of the correlated school. It is highly desirable to have trained teachers for this part of the work and in most communities they should be paid. Classes can usually be much larger in the week-day sessions than they are in the Sunday sessions. The week-day teacher should make frequent reviews, so as to be sure that both the week-day lesson material and the Sunday lesson material is being mastered by the pupils. If necessary, arrangements should be made for taking lessons over if they have not been mastered. This will be possible because the lessons are not limited to any time schedule.

The material for each week-day session contains some extra-Biblical material, usually in the form of a missionary story. These stories are in the nature of suggestions. The efficient teacher will find many more for use in the class and will seek to emphasize the Bible teaching by these modern illustrations of the Bible truth. (See supplemental material for mission instruction named under the section giving suggestions for the Sunday session.)

## SUGGESTIONS CONCERNING THE SUNDAY SESSION

The Sunday session of the correlated school is chiefly responsible for training the pupils in worship. Wherever possible, materials suitable for the attainment of this end have been selected for the Sunday session. The attainment of the desired goal will depend on the department superintendent and the teachers. Every effort ought to be made to secure and maintain a spirit of reverence and devotion. Hymns should be carefully chosen and the program of opening worship planned. Intermediate pupils are old enough to be given a large share in the service of worship and it is highly desirable that this privilege be given to them. Pupils should read the Scripture, take up the offering, lead in prayer, and in other ways assist in the service.

The teachers of the Sunday session ought to be familiar with the materials presented to the pupils in the week-day sessions, and the program to be carried out in the expressional meeting. It is only thus that the desired unity can be attained in the pursuit of the course. The Sunday teacher ought to have the privilege to review the week-day lesson and to use the questions which are found in the material for the expressional meetings. The pupils will be all the better prepared for the expressional meeting if they have discussed these questions with their Sunday teacher.

Certain extra-Biblical stories are introduced in the Sunday lesson material. These are usually of a missionary nature. By a skillful use of these stories and others like them, the Sunday teacher will be able to connect the New Testament Church with the Church of to-day and lead the pupils to see that they are the successors of the apostles and first-century Christians in the great task to which Jesus assigned them and us.

These stories are only suggestions. Many others of the same kind ought to be used. Teachers will find suitable material in the following books:

"The Book of Missionary Heroes," by Basil Matthews. Doran.

"Missionary Programs and Incidents," by George H. Trull. Missionary Education Movement, 156 Fifth Ave., New York.

These and other suitable books may be secured from the Presbyterian bookstores.

Each Sunday lesson contains a lesson prayer. Many teachers use this in the class for a brief period of worship at the beginning or the close of the lesson period. Teachers may well compose other prayers or ask pupils to do so and the pupils should be encouraged to offer extemporaneous prayer.

The material for each Sunday session ends with a great hymn of the Church which is to be studied under the direction of the Sunday teacher. These hymns have been selected with a view to their fitness to emphasize the truths which are contained in the preceding lesson materials. All are contained in the book, "Studies of Familiar Hymns," by Louis F. Benson. Westminster Press. A copy of this book should be in the hands of every Sunday teacher of this course. Pupils may be asked to keep notebooks in which they record facts concerning the hymns as given by the teacher. The aim is to make these great hymns a lasting possession of the pupils.



## SUGGESTIONS CONCERNING THE EXPRESSIONAL SESSION

The expressional meeting is of great importance. In this session the pupils learn spiritual initiative and self-expression. By carrying out the program of activities planned in the expressional sessions, pupils make the truths they have learned a part of their daily life and conduct. The superintendent of the expressional session has therefore a task of utmost importance. So far as possible, the expressional sessions should be carried on by the pupils themselves. This is their meeting in which they plan to put into effect what they have been studying.

It is recommended that the expressional meetings, whenever conditions seem favorable, should be organized as Christian Endeavor Societies. There is distinct value in being thus tied to a great national organization and in being a part of a community organization of young people such as the Christian Endeavor unions. The using of topics other than those gotten out by the Christian Endeavor Society in no way makes it necessary for the expressional organization to be independent of the Christian Endeavor movement.

For the convenience of the leader of the meeting and the superintendent of the organization, the material for the expressional session is grouped under certain heads. First comes a brief and suggestive study of some Scripture passage which is the basis of the topic. The superintendent should assign this introductory matter to the leader of the meeting or some other pupil. Suggestions should be made for other materials, if this seems desirable.

Then come some definite statements concerning the truths learned in the Sunday session and the week-day session of the school. The teacher should use these as suggestions and encourage pupils to form similar statements of their own.

The review questions will help to tie the expressional session to the other sessions and will prepare the minds

of the pupils for the meeting by refreshing their memory of what has been studied. These questions may be used in a variety of ways, which will suggest themselves to the trained teacher or superintendent.

The Bible verses have some direct bearing on the theme and ought not to be merely read by the pupils. Verses should be assigned to pupils before the beginning of the meeting so that they will have time to study them and speak on the theme they suggest.

The study topics ought to be taken up as one of the main parts of the session. They aim to bring the truths taught in the preceding sessions into living contact with the pupils. It will be found best to assign these topics some time before the expressional meeting, perhaps at the week-day session of the school. Pupils will thus have an opportunity to make investigations and prepare themselves to present something of real value to the class. The superintendent should be ready to help pupils in the study of topics assigned.

Perhaps the most important matter in the whole program is that suggested under the heading, "Putting the Truths of the Lesson Into Practice." The ways in which the truths which have been studied may be given expression vary in every community, and with individual pupils. The superintendent must be a skilled workman who knows the pupils intimately and who can guide their activities into the ways which will result in lasting spiritual development. A few suggestions are given in each lesson, but the efficient supervisor will need to seek out other ways which are suggested by conditions in the community and the needs of the pupils.

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## THE APOSTLES' CREED

I BELIEVE in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth: And in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell;\* the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy Catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

\* *i. e.* Continued in the state of the dead and under the power of death until the third day.



CHAPTER I  
THE GREAT FORERUNNER OF JESUS  
WEEK DAY SESSION

THE LAST AND GREATEST OF THE HEBREW  
PROPHETS

Matt., ch. 3; Luke 3:1-22; John 1:19-34

The Hebrew prophets were great orators. The sublimity of their utterances has stirred the hearts of many generations. They were great statesmen. With clear vision they read aright the perplexing events of their day. They pointed unerringly to the sources of the evils which were gathering about the Hebrew people and shadowing all the world. Above all, they were great in the elements of personal character. They were simple in their manner of life and sincere under every condition. They were courageous, energetic, compassionate. In this chapter we are to study the life of one who was the last and greatest of the Hebrew prophets. Jesus said of him that he was a prophet, and "much more than a prophet," that no greater had ever been born.

**Old Testament Prophecies Concerning John.** Mal. 3:1; Isa. 40:3-5. So important was the work assigned to John in the providence of God that some of the Old Testament prophets foresaw his coming. Malachi told the people of his day that the Lord would suddenly come to his temple, but that before he came he would send his messenger to prepare the way before him. In the prophecy of Malachi this one who should make ready for the coming of the Lord is called Elijah. The prophet seems to have meant that this forerunner of the Lord should be a man who would go forth to his great task with the spirit and power of Elijah. Isaiah, too, believed that Jehovah would come in person to his people, and that the voice of one crying in the wilderness would summon the faithful to make ready the highway of God.

**God's Perfect Plan.** Mark 1:1-8. As we read these

first verses of the Gospel According to Mark we are impressed with the continuity and the perfectness of God's plans for saving the world. They bind together the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament ends with the promise of the coming of a Saviour of the world and tells us that there shall be one who will go before this Saviour King and make ready for him. The Gospel According to Mark, perhaps the first New Testament book to be written, takes up the narrative of the Old Testament and tells of the one who should prepare for the coming of the promised Saviour of the world.

God's plans are perfect. If they ever seem to fail it is because men fail in the part which God has assigned to them. What did the people of that day need to do in order to be ready for the coming of the Messiah? They needed, first of all, to repent of their sins.

So John's message was a call to repentance. He "preached the baptism of repentance unto remission of sins." Multitudes of people responded to the appeal. They professed repentance and were baptized. The repentance of many of John's converts seems to have been shallow and temporary. They soon forgot their new resolves and returned to their old habits of life. There were some, however, in whom a profound spiritual change had been wrought. These became disciples of John and later were among the most intimate and faithful followers of Jesus.

**Preparing for a King and a Kingdom.** Luke 3:1-22. John not only proclaimed that the King was at hand but that the Kingdom of heaven was soon to begin. Therefore he was intensely practical in his sermons. He told the people that they must not only repent, but that they must "bring forth . . . fruits worthy of repentance." He meant that they must show by their changed manner of life that they were truly sorry for the sins they had committed. For the common people, for the Pharisees, for the publicans, and for the soldiers, John had some practical suggestion as to how they could contribute toward the setting up of that Kingdom of service and brotherhood which was soon to begin.

**Only a Voice in the Wilderness.** John 1:19-34. John was a truly unselfish man. His one great desire was to



make ready for the Kingdom of God and to make known the Saviour of the world. He said that he was not the Christ. He would lay no claim to being Elijah. When asked if he were the prophet who should come he answered emphatically, "No." He was only a voice of the wilderness proclaiming that the Messiah was drawing near and that all should repent of their sins in preparation for his appearance. Great and heroic characters of history have been like John. They have been free from selfishness.

**The Joy of the Bridegroom's Friend.** John 3:22-30. The purity and nobility of John's character were revealed by an incident which occurred when the ministry of Jesus was just begun and the ministry of John was drawing near to its close. Jesus was preaching and his disciples were baptizing. In a little while it was noted that the crowds about John were decreasing, while the crowds about Jesus were growing larger. This seems to have caused concern to some of the disciples of John. They came to him saying, "Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond the Jordan, to whom thou hast borne witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him." The increasing popularity of Jesus and his own waning sway over the multitudes awakened no feeling of jealousy in the noble spirit of John. On the contrary, he was deeply glad because of the growing success of Jesus. He told his disciples that he was like the friend of the bridegroom at an Oriental wedding. This friend of the bridegroom at an Eastern wedding labors diligently, planning all the events of the wedding ceremonial and seeing to it that all the plans are carried out. He receives no pay in money. He has no honors bestowed upon him. The eyes of all the company are upon the bridegroom, not upon the bridegroom's friend. He stands outside the door when the marriage ceremony is performed, but he is not sad. He hears the bridegroom's voice and he is made happy by the happiness of his friend. This joy which comes to one because he has helped to make another happy is one of the deepest and most enduring joys that the human heart can experience. John could say truly, "This my joy therefore is made full."

## A TWENTIETH CENTURY FORERUNNER OF THE CHRIST

John's work was not entirely different from that of some people of to-day. Those who go out as missionaries into countries where Jesus is little known, or known not at all, are making ready for the coming of the Lord.

Some years ago there was a professor in the Kansas State Normal School named Thomas M. Iden. He had such a fatherly love for all the young men of that school that he was generally known as "Father Iden." Every Friday evening he gathered the young men into a Bible class. In this Bible class was a young fellow named Albert Shelton. Under the teaching of Father Iden young Shelton began to think about what he was going to do with his life. Both the instruction and the example of his beloved teacher led him to feel that he ought to give his life to the service of his fellow men and to the building up of God's Kingdom on earth. He decided that he could make his life most useful by becoming a medical missionary. He wished to go to the country where there was the greatest need.

To the north of the Himalaya mountains lies the Plateau of Tibet. The capital of Tibet is Lhasa, the sacred city of the Buddhists. Lhasa has long been known as "The Forbidden City," because no foreigner is allowed to enter within its walls. There was no missionary in all Tibet. Albert Shelton took it as his life task to carry the message of Christianity into Tibet and to the "Forbidden City."

Of course, he could not enter the country at once, but there is a small portion of Northern Tibet which is controlled, in a measure, by the Chinese. China claims a sort of protectorate over the whole country, but its authority really extends only a very little way across the northern boundary of the Tibetan territory. Dr. Shelton secured permission from the Chinese Government to locate in this small strip of country which was under the control of China. He thus gained an opportunity to go among the Tibetans and to learn their language. He labored on for years, winning the friendship of many of the people, but always longing for the day when he might enter the interior of the land and bear

his ministry of healing and the message of truth into the Forbidden City.

For twenty years he labored and hoped, but at the end of that time the triumph of his plans seemed further away than ever. Civil wars in China had all but destroyed Chinese authority in Northern Tibet. Wild hordes of Tibetan bandits swept through the country. Dr. Shelton was captured by one of these robber bands and carried away. The bandits demanded a large ransom for his return, but the Chinese authorities would not permit any ransom to be paid, so the robbers carried Dr. Shelton about with them for months. Gradually he won their confidence and their friendship. He was the physician of the group and they marveled at his power to heal. Once a number of the bandits plotted mutiny against their chief and wished Dr. Shelton to become their leader in an uprising against his authority, but they found that the prisoner had no desire for leadership won through plotting and bloodshed. Dr. Shelton became ill and suffered terribly as he was carried about from hiding place to hiding place as the robbers fled before the Chinese soldiers. At last the bandits were so closely pressed that they had to abandon their prisoner. It took months to nurse Dr. Shelton back to health but as soon as he was well, he went back to his task.

The World War came on and young men from even far-away Tibet were drawn into the dreadful conflict. Dr. Shelton went among these Tibetan soldiers and ministered to their sick. He knew their language and their needs better than any other white person in the world. He won the friendship and confidence of thousands of Tibetan soldiers. He told some of them of his lifelong hope to go to the capital of their nation and establish a Christian hospital there.

After the close of the war, Dr. Shelton returned to the United States for a short rest. While in this country he was gladdened by a message which came to him from the Government of Tibet. He was invited to come to the Forbidden City to begin the building of a hospital. The Tibetan soldiers had spread the story of Dr. Shelton's ministrations in the army camps and now the realization of his life dreams seemed at hand. He returned to

Northern Tibet expecting to make his way from there to Lhasa. But he was never to set foot within the Forbidden City. His mission, like that of John the Baptist, was one of preparation. He had opened the gates for others to enter. A few weeks after he left this country the ocean cables flashed back to America the message: "Dr. Shelton has been killed by bandits in Northern Tibet." But Dr. Shelton won his goal, nevertheless. He was not striving all through the years merely that he himself might enter Lhasa. He was laboring that the King of kings might enter the Forbidden City and he was making ready a highway for the Lord.

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## SUNDAY SESSION

### A MOMENT OF DOUBT AND A HEROIC DEATH

Matt. 11:2-19; 14:1-12

The New Testament speaks of those who show "respect of persons for the sake of advantage." John the Baptist was not such a person. He reproved the Pharisees for their sins just as he spoke to the soldiers and the publicans. He never tried to curry favor with those who possessed position and authority. This fearless and democratic spirit of John finally got him into trouble, but without it he would not have been a worthy forerunner of the Messiah.

**A Prophet Who Dared to Reprove a King.** Matt. 14:3-5. Herod Antipas was a crafty and cruel ruler. His private life was likewise scandalous, for he stole his brother's wife and married her. John had reproved the publicans for extortion. He had reproved the Roman soldiers for their greed and their blackmail. He had scathingly condemned the Pharisees calling them the "offspring of vipers." Now the ruler of the land in which John was living had committed a bold offense against law and decency. A less courageous man than John would have hesitated before he opened his mouth against Herod. To speak against the king meant almost certain imprisonment and death. There were plenty of self-

seeking Jews about Herod, flattering him and ready to find excuses for any crime he might commit. But John was not like these hangers-on at the court of Herod Antipas. He reproved Herod for his wickedness and was forthwith cast into prison.

**The Dungeon of Machærus.** The place of John's imprisonment is thought to have been the lonely castle of Machærus, east of the Dead Sea. Herod was afraid to put John to death lest there be an uprising of the people, for the common people of the country believed that John was a prophet. So Herod just kept John in the dungeon. John seems to have been a kind of curiosity to Herod, for we are told that he sent for John many times and brought him out of the dungeon that he might talk with him. Perhaps Herod had never met before a man who talked to him in the way that John did. He seems to have enjoyed the novelty of having a man speak to him without flattery, telling him the plain truth, for we are told that he heard John gladly. But not so Herodias, the wicked woman who had forsaken one brother to become the wife of another. John's bold proclamation of the illegality of her marriage to Herod endangered her position as queen, and with a heart full of bitter hate she sought the destruction of the prophet who had dared to tell her of her sin.

**John Sends Messengers to Jesus.** Matt. 11:2-6. John was a man of the out of doors. He had been a country boy. He had lived as a man in the wilderness. To be confined in a dungeon was a terrible experience for him. It is said that in the dungeons of Machærus sulphurous volcanic fumes were constantly coming up through the cracks in the rocks on which the castle was erected. John was a man of Old Testament ideas. He doubtless expected the Messiah to set up an earthly kingdom.

After many weeks of imprisonment John seems to have begun to wonder whether he may not have been mistaken as to Jesus' being the Messiah. He was not doubting the words of Jesus, for, so far as we know, Jesus had never made such a claim even to John. He was rather doubting his own conclusions. Like the honest-hearted man that he was, John determined to send his disciples directly to Jesus that they might make inquiry concern-

ing the matter which was troubling him. So these disciples came to Jesus saying that their Master wished them to ask this question, "Art thou he that cometh, or look we for another?"

Jesus answered the question in a remarkable way. He kept right on with his work of healing and teaching for some time; then he told the disciples to go and tell their master the things which they had seen and heard, that the blind were receiving sight, that the lame were being caused to walk and the deaf to hear, that even the dead were being raised up, and that the poor were having the gospel preached unto them. Then Jesus added in kindly warning, "And blessed is he, whosoever shall find no occasion of stumbling in me."

**The Death of John the Baptist.** Matt. 14:6-12. Herodias had been watching for an opportunity to have John put to death, but Herod would not consent to these wishes of his wicked queen. After a time Herod was celebrating his birthday with his friends. Perhaps they were all half-drunk. The daughter of Herodias came in and danced before the king and his friends. That the princess should act as a dancing girl to please him and his friends flattered the muddled mind of Herod and he rashly promised to give the girl anything she should ask, even if she should ask for half of his kingdom. The daughter of Herodias went out and consulted her mother as to what request she should make. Perhaps Herodias had been planning for exactly such an outcome and she told her daughter to ask for the head of John the Baptist.

When Herod heard this request, he was grieved. His false pride, however, kept him from "backing out" before his friends, so he ordered the shameful deed to be done and John was beheaded in the dungeon. Thus perished the kingly man at the hands of the unmanly king and his cruel queen.

#### SIR THOMAS MORE IN AN ENGLISH DUNGEON

John the Baptist chose to die rather than compromise the truth. There were values which he placed far above the value of mere physical well-being. Such heroic characters are scattered here and there through history. Sir

Thomas More was such a man. He was one of the most learned men of his times. He stood high in the favor of the king and held many positions of honor and trust. But the time came when a cruel and selfish king commanded Sir Thomas to do that which was wrong. When Sir Thomas refused, he was cast into prison and he was warned that continued disobedience to the king meant his execution. Even the wife of Sir Thomas could not understand the high ground her husband had taken for conscience' sake. She came to him in the prison and begged him to submit to the king's command. "Oh, why should you stay here in this vile place with the rats and the mice," said she, "when by speaking only a word you might be restored to favor with the king, and be given honor, power, and wealth?" But Sir Thomas More would not yield even to his wife's pleading. He counted righteousness and virtue more precious than life.

#### THE LESSON PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, we thank thee for the life story of thy servant, John the Baptist. We thank thee that thou hast raised up others like him in every century, who have lived lives that were true and courageous and who have been willing to give up life itself rather than do that which they knew to be evil. Our problems are small compared with the problems which these heroes of the faith have had to meet, but we need something of that same devotion to righteousness and truth which they possessed. Help us, then, in times of temptation that we may be victorious over evil and that we may always choose the way that is right, even though it be the way of self-sacrifice and present pain. We ask in the name of Jesus, the Saviour of the world. Amen.

#### THE LESSON HYMN

"Take My Life, and Let It Be." "Studies of Familiar Hymns," page 211.

**EXPRESSIONAL SESSION****THE PENALTIES OF SELFISHNESS AND THE  
REWARDS OF UNSELFISHNESS**

Phil. 2:1-11

Our Scripture lesson is one of Paul's earnest appeals to his beloved Philippian Christians. It is a noble call to the unselfish life. He urges them to be of one accord and one mind and to put away those factions and rivalries which are the result of selfishness. What we need most, in the home, the school, the Church, and the nation, is that unselfish spirit which leads each member of these organizations of society to look not only to his own things but also to the things of others.

Paul wisely points the Philippians to Christ as the great example of unselfishness. Jesus was God's Son; he existed "in the form of God." Yet he "emptied himself" and took the form of a servant. For the salvation of others he became obedient even to the death of the cross. This measureless unselfishness of Jesus did not go unrewarded, however. Paul says, "Wherefore also God highly exalted him, and gave unto him the name which is above every name." This exaltation of Jesus because of his profound unselfishness is not a unique and arbitrary act of God; it is rather the result of a universal law which works in every life and in every age.

**SOME TRUTHS FROM THE LESSONS WE HAVE BEEN  
STUDYING**

Herod Antipas is a splendid illustration of the penalties which fall upon a selfish life. John the Baptist is a splendid illustration of the rewards of unselfishness. All that we know about Herod shows that he was intensely selfish. He ruled his country selfishly. He cared so little for his own brother that he was willing to wrong him outrageously if he could thereby satisfy his own wishes. Let us see what selfishness did for Herod. It made him a coward. Selfishness and heroic courage can hardly exist side by side in the same personality. Herod was afraid of the multitudes. He was afraid that his friends might laugh at him if he refused to keep his promise to



the daughter of Herodias. All his later years were haunted by fear. When he heard about Jesus, his guilty life made him superstitious and timid. He said with blanched cheeks and inner trembling, "John, whom I beheaded, he is risen." Herod tried to have a good time in life. He had wealth and power and every luxury. He gathered his friends to his gay festivals, but we can see that he was not really happy. A selfish person can never know the deepest happiness.

John the Baptist had none of the things which Herod possessed. He was poor and without position or influential friends. Yet his profound unselfishness brought him great rewards. It made him a happy man. We hear Herod speaking of fear and grief, whereas John told his disciples that the success of the ministry of Jesus was giving him fullness of joy. John's unselfishness made him courageous, useful, and powerful over the lives of others.

#### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Name some of the characteristics of the Hebrew prophets.
2. Why is John the Baptist entitled to the term "greatest of the prophets"?
3. What was John's work and why was it necessary?
4. Name an incident which shows John's unselfishness.
5. Name an incident which shows the selfishness of Herod.
6. Tell briefly the story of Dr. Shelton.
7. Why did John send messengers to Jesus?
8. What words of commendation did Jesus speak concerning John?
9. Would it have been wrong for Herod to break his promise to the daughter of Herodias?
10. Did Sir Thomas More do right when he refused to save his life by obeying the king?

#### BIBLE VERSES

Isa. 56:11; Luke 3:11; 14:33; Acts 2:44, 45; Rom. 15:1-3; I Cor. 10:24; 13:5; II Cor. 5:15; II Tim. 3:2; James 2:8.

## STUDY TOPICS

1. Abraham's Unselfish Choice and Its Reward. Gen. 13:8, 9, 14-17.
2. Lot's Selfish Choice and Its Penalty. Gen. 13:11, 12.
3. How Selfishness Made King Saul Jealous and Unhappy. I Sam. 18:6-9.
4. The Noble Unselfishness of Jonathan. I Sam. 18:1-5.
5. Unselfish Acts in the Life of Jesus. Matt. 4:8-10; John 6:15; 18:8.
6. Ways in Which Selfishness Mars the Life of the Home.
7. Is Unselfishness Necessary for the Highest Types of Courage? Why?
8. Can Anyone Who Is Essentially Self-Centered Be a True Friend?
9. Benedict Arnold: An American Who Loved Himself More Than He Loved His Country.
10. Ways in Which We May Cultivate a Spirit of Unselfishness. (Giving up seat in street car to women or elderly people; helping mother about the house, et cetera.)

## PUTTING THE TRUTHS OF THE LESSON INTO PRACTICE

Plan for a self-denial week in which money usually spent for self is saved and put into a fund to be used for benevolent purposes under the direction of the class. Have written, but unsigned, reports on the forms of self-denial employed during this week by members of the class. Let the teacher or some member of the class read these reports at the next meeting so that they may be discussed in the class.

## CHAPTER II

### WOMEN WHO WERE AMONG THE EARLY FOLLOWERS OF JESUS

#### WEEK DAY SESSION

#### MARY THE MOTHER OF JESUS

Luke 1:26-38, 46-55; 2:51

Jesus chose his twelve apostles from among the men of the Jewish nation. He was wise in choosing only men for this company because the work lying before them was of a kind that in that age only men ought to undertake. We must not conclude, however, that women had no part in the plans of Jesus, nor can we believe that the part which they played in the beginnings of the Kingdom was unimportant.

The life of Jesus was one of constant service. He ministered to men, women, and children. He healed the sick, cured the blind, taught those who were groping in spiritual darkness, preached righteousness to the multitudes. He came "not to be ministered unto, but to minister." He ministered to the physical needs of his followers, for he washed his disciples' feet, directed them where to cast their fishing nets, and on one occasion, at least, when they came to shore wet and weary with all-night fishing they found a fire kindled and a hot breakfast awaiting them. We do not read much about the disciples' ministering to Jesus; it was rather he that ministered to them.

When we come to the case of the women who were followers of Jesus, the case is quite different. They were a band of ministering women. These women raised the money necessary to meet the needs of Jesus and his disciples. We read of a woman who washed the feet of Jesus with her tears and wiped them with her hair. It was a woman who broke the alabaster cruse of precious perfume that she might anoint Jesus as he reclined at

meat. Women helped to take down his body from the cross and to lay it away in Joseph's sepulcher. But the woman who must have ministered most to Jesus was his mother. We do not believe that we ought to pay divine honor to Mary of Nazareth, but she is worthy of the highest human honors. She, from among all the women who have ever lived, was chosen to be the mother of the world's Saviour and to guide his infant feet into the pathways of duty and service.

**The Maiden of Nazareth.** Luke 1:26-38. Although Mary was of the house of David, her family were evidently people of humble circumstances, laboring folk of a backwoods town in Galilee. It was in humble homes like these, however, that the purity of the Jewish religion had been preserved. It was to a humble home in this quiet town that the angel came, bearing a message concerning the birth of the Son of God into the world.

What perfection must have been Mary's that she should be chosen for this sublime office! We may well think of her as being the very highest product of the Jewish race and of the Old Testament religion. "Fear not, Mary; for thou hast found favor with God"—these words assure us that Mary's past life had been such as to fit her for her lofty mission as the mother of the Redeemer. Faith, courage, modesty, and humble obedience to God's will are shown in her words to the angel: "Behold, the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word."

**Mary's Psalm of Praise.** Luke 1:46-55. The character of Mary is shown in the beautiful psalm of praise which she uttered when she was visiting her kinswoman, Elizabeth. Mary was a person of no ordinary powers of mind and heart. She had the soul of a poetess. As we read her psalm we are impressed by the spirit of intense religious fervor which runs through it. We do not believe that Mary uttered this wonderful little hymn of praise to God in a merely mechanical way. We believe that it expressed the deep religious experiences of her soul. It shows us that she was a woman of great intellectual and spiritual power.

**The Heart of a Mother.** Luke 2:19, 51. The Gospel According to Luke gives us our fullest accounts con-

cerning Mary. It is probable that Luke, as he labored to collect the facts connected with the life of Jesus, either met Mary herself and talked with her or that he met some of the women who were closely associated with Mary. The minuteness with which he describes events connected with Mary and the fact that he twice says that Mary "kept all these sayings" in her heart, makes it seem likely that he knew the mother of Jesus and that she told him concerning the incidents in the life of Jesus which she had treasured in her heart all through the years.

**The Problems of a Mother.** Mark 3:20-35; Luke 2:48-50; John 2:1-11. That Mary could not fully understand her Son even when he was only a lad is shown by the account which we have of the finding of the boy Jesus in the Temple when he was twelve years old. We are told that Joseph and Mary "understood not the saying which he spake unto them." At the wedding feast in Cana, the same inability of Mary to comprehend Jesus is again evident. Nevertheless she had perfect confidence in him and said to the servants, "Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it."

As Jesus began his ministry and went forward in his labor of organizing the Kingdom of God, nobody understood him. Great and wise leaders have always had to battle against this difficulty growing out of the inability of others to understand their plans and methods. We have seen how little the disciples understood their Master up to the very end of his ministry. John the Baptist could not comprehend the methods which Jesus was using and sent his disciples to ask whether Jesus was the Christ or whether they should look for another.

So we need not be surprised to find out that the family of Jesus misunderstood him for a long time. This lack of sympathy on the part of his relatives was probably one of the heaviest burdens of Jesus. He loved his brothers and his mother, but he must not let their inability to understand his plans and purposes hinder his great life work.

We read that at one time the brothers of Jesus urged him to go up to Jerusalem on one of the great feast days. They advised him to show himself to the disciples in

Judea, saying, "No man doeth anything in secret, and himself seeketh to be known openly." These brothers of Jesus wished him to make some great public demonstration of his power which would win him a large following and demonstrate that he was the Messiah. They were evidently not ready to believe in him themselves, unless he should make some such demonstration of power as they advised, for we are told that "even his brethren did not believe on him," John 7:5.

As the opposition to Jesus grew, his relatives became alarmed. They said, "He is beside himself," and they came down to Capernaum seeking to put him under restraint. The mother of Jesus and his brothers, like the other Jews, had long been thinking in terms of a temporal kingdom and they could not understand Jesus' plans and labors for a spiritual kingdom. The aims of Jesus seemed so impractical and so entirely strange that they thought he must be losing his mind and that they ought to take him by force and confine him for a time.

**The Faith of a Mother.** John 19:23-27. The mystery of it all must have deepened for Mary as Jesus drew nearer to the cross. How Mary's faith must have been tested when her Son was crucified! Had not the angel said before her Son was born, "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end"? Yet the mother love of Mary was triumphant. She did not forsake her Son. So far as we know, she offered no word of reproof. She was faithful to the end, even though she could not understand. She walked by faith where she could not walk by sight.

**With the Disciples After the Resurrection.** Acts 1:12-14. The resurrection of Jesus swept away the clouds of mystery from the minds of the followers of Jesus. Speaking to his fellow Christians of the Early Church, Peter said that God had begotten them "again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." After the resurrection the disciples understood. They saw that Jesus had laid the foundations of a Kingdom far grander than any of which they

or their forefathers had ever dreamed. They saw that he was a King, indeed, the Founder of an everlasting Kingdom which should cover all the earth. We are glad to know that the mother of Jesus and his brothers were among this glad company of disciples who banded themselves together and launched confidently out on their sublime task of making the kingdoms of the earth the Kingdom of our Lord and his Christ.

### A CHILD WIDOW OF INDIA

Chundra Lela was a little girl of Nepal, a country on the northern border of India. When only seven years old she was married to a little boy of nine, for such is the custom of the land in which Chundra Lela lived. Two years later the little boy to whom Chundra Lela was married died. Now the sacred books of the Hindus teach that when a husband dies it is because the wife has committed some terrible sin. So all the grown people of the household came around the poor little child widow, looking at her with suspicion and fierce anger. They said, "You wicked creature; this is all your fault." So they tore the earrings from her ears, her beautiful bracelets were hammered off her arms, and she became a despised little slave, constantly kicked and cuffed and cursed by everyone who saw her, for they all said, "She is a wicked, wicked creature, for she caused her husband to die." Do you think the Hindu sacred books are worthy to be compared with our wonderful Bible which tells us of the loving Father in heaven, and his Son who came to save the world from the curse of sin? And yet a certain professor in one of our largest universities says that there are nine great bibles in the world: The sacred writings of the Hindus is one of the bibles in his list and our Bible is another. He puts them all together and says that they are all much alike.

Since everyone said so, Chundra Lela, too, thought that she was a great sinner. She read all the sacred books of the Hindus she could secure for she wished to find out how she could find peace and forgiveness. One book said that if anyone should make a pilgrimage to four sacred shrines of India, the sins of that person would

be forgiven. So Chundra Lela determined to undertake the long journey to these distant shrines that she might be free from the sense of guilt and gain the confidence of those who constantly suspected and mistreated her. She was only fifteen years old, but she started out with two other companions, girls of her own age. The journey took seven years. When it was ended nothing had been gained.

Chundra Lela turned next to other methods of winning spiritual peace. She sat day after day under the burning sun of India with five hot fires blazing near her. When the weather became cooler she went every night into a pond and sat there with the water up to her neck. Through the long night she held in her hands a string of beads. Each of the beads on the string stood for the name of an idol, and there were one hundred and eight of them. During the night she would go over the string of beads a thousand times, touching each bead in turn and calling on the name of the god it represented, thus repeating the names of the gods one hundred and eight thousand times in one night.

One day Chundra Lela met a woman of her race who had been in a Christian school. This woman gave her a copy of the Bible in the Hindu language. Chundra Lela was charmed by the simple story of a divine Saviour who came to bring peace and forgiveness to all the children of men. She became a Christian and a great missionary to the people of her native land.

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## SUNDAY SESSION

### WOMEN WHO HELPED JESUS IN THE DAYS OF HIS MINISTRY

Matt. 27:55, 56; 28:1-10; Luke 8:1-3; John 11:1-45

We have seen how important was the help which certain women rendered Jesus during the days of his ministry. Unfortunately, we know very little about these women. It is altogether probable that the influence of women over the apostolic company and over the Early



Church was far greater than appears on the surface. It is an old and true saying that back of every truly great man lies a truly great mother. So we may believe that back of the men whom Jesus chose were certain women, for the most part unknown to us, but none the less potent in the lives of the men with whom we have become familiar. The mother of James and Joses and the mother of Zebedee's children were in all probability as important a part of the apostolic company, as were their sons.

**A Band of Ministering Women.** Luke 8:1-3. In the days of Jesus the expenses of travel were not large, because of the hospitality which was customary in the land of the Jews. Food and lodging would usually be offered to Jesus and his company without pay. Nevertheless, the company must have had some constant and considerable expenses. This is suggested by the fact that they had a common treasury of which Judas was the custodian. There must have been a considerable supply of clothing provided for thirteen men during a period of some three years. There were doubtless many times when the disciples had to buy food. Such would certainly be the case on the journeys which Jesus made with his disciples through Samaria and into the northern Gentile territory. The buying of food by the disciples is mentioned a number of times in the Gospels.

We might never have known where the money necessary to meet the needs of Jesus and his disciples came from if Luke the careful historian had not searched the matter out. There was a band of women who had become followers of Jesus and who "ministered" to him "of their substance." Some of these women had been healed by Jesus and their devotion to him and to his cause was an expression of heartfelt gratitude to their Benefactor. At least one of them was a woman from the highest circles of society. Her name was Joanna and she was the wife of Herod's steward. It is good for us to remember that this little band of grateful and consecrated women made it possible for Jesus and his twelve disciples to go "about through cities and villages preaching and bringing the good tidings of the kingdom of God."

**The Women Who Gave Jesus a Home.** Luke

10:38-42. Jesus can scarcely be said to have had a home after he began his ministry. The family moved from Nazareth down to Capernaum soon after Jesus began preaching, but their residence there seems to have been brief. The mother of Jesus became a member of the company which followed Jesus in his preaching trips and she was homeless until, at the request of Jesus on the cross, the apostle John took her to his own house. There was one home, however, which was always open to Jesus, the home of Mary and Martha and Lazarus in the village of Bethany. These three were among the most intimate of the friends of Jesus. Their love for Jesus and his love for them stand out as bright pictures against the dark background of Pharisaic hatreds and plottings.

**Last at the Cross.** Matt. 27:55, 56. When Jesus was arrested in Gethsemane, his disciples all ran away, though later some of them returned and entered the house where Jesus was on trial. But the women who had been with Jesus never forsook him. They seem to have come to Jesus as soon as they heard that he was in the hands of his enemies. They were at Calvary when Jesus was crucified and there was a large company of them. Matthew says that "many women were there . . . who had followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto him." These faithful women were present when the body of Jesus was placed in Joseph's sepulcher. They sat and watched after the stone had been rolled across the portal and Joseph of Arimathæa had gone away with Nicodemus.

**First at the Empty Tomb.** Matt. 28:1-10. Some of the women of this ministering band were the first to come to the empty tomb of Jesus on the morning of the resurrection. They had come with spices to prepare the body of Jesus for its permanent burial, but they found that the stone was rolled away and the grave was empty. To these women Jesus made his first appearance after his resurrection, bidding them go and tell his disciples that he was risen from the dead and that he would appear to them shortly in Galilee.

**The Band of Ministering Women Becomes a Part of the First Christian Church.** Acts 1:14; 12:12-17. This band of ministering women became an important part

of the Christian Church as it began to take shape in the days following the resurrection of Jesus. It became a kind of praying band from whose meetings the disciples went out with power and courage to preach that Jesus was the Messiah and that he had risen from the dead. These ministering women helped to make up the group in the upper chamber in Jerusalem where the followers of Jesus were gathered after his ascension. They were present when the power of the Spirit came on the Day of Pentecost. They were gathered in the house of Mary, the mother of John Mark, praying for the safety of Peter when he came knocking at the gate after his miraculous escape from the prison of Herod.

#### A COURAGEOUS QUEEN WHO DELIVERED HER SUBJECTS FROM SUPERSTITIOUS FEAR

When the history of the Christian Church is written in full, it will be seen that woman's work in the evangelization of the world has been no less than man's. Paul's first convert to Christianity in Europe was a woman, and many other foreign missionaries have had experiences similar to that of the great apostle to the Gentiles. The Hawaiian Islanders were turned away from idolatry to the Christian faith by the courage of a woman.

For many generations the people of the Hawaiian Islands had worshiped the goddess Pele. They believed that she was the goddess of fire and that she had her dwelling place in the fiery crater of great Mount Kilauea. When the Christian missionaries came to Hawaii, one of the first to become interested in the new teaching was the queen, Kapiolani. Many of the people wished to become Christians but they could not break away from the superstitious fears which had bound their ancestors for untold generations. They feared that they would all be consumed in the fire of Pele's wrath if they ceased to worship the dreadful fire goddess.

Kapiolani determined to free her people from this superstitious fear. She announced that she would go boldly into the very abode of Pele and defy her. If she should be consumed by the wrath of the goddess, the

people were to continue to worship Pele, but if she escaped unhurt the people were to turn to the worship of Jehovah, the God of the missionaries. Frantic appeals from her relatives and subjects could not deter the courageous queen. She set out across the vast lava fields toward the smoking crater of Kilauea. Some of her subjects, trembling with fear, accompanied her.

On the slopes of the mountain grew the chelo berries, which were sacred to the fire goddess. No Hawaiian would think of taking even one of these berries unless the consent of the goddess had been announced by one of her priests. The people were amazed to see the queen gather these berries and eat them. When they reached the rim of the crater, the queen went boldly down into the great smoking caldron. She crossed over the lava floor where hot steam was spouting out of the cracks here and there. She came near to the brink of the great lake of fire seething at the center of the crater. Gathering up fragments of rock she hurled them again and again into the burning lake and uttered defiance to Pele. Then turning to her people she said: "Jehovah is my God. He kindles these fires. I fear not Pele." That day marked the beginning of the end of paganism in the Hawaiian Islands.

#### THE LESSON PRAYER

We give thee thanks, our Father in heaven, for the heroic women of history. We are glad to know that there were good women who ministered to Jesus in the days when he was laboring on earth and that they lightened his burdens through their thoughtful kindness. We pray that we may have the same spirit of helpfulness. Teach us to be always courteous and kind. Teach us how to do our part for the building up of that universal Kingdom of brotherhood which Jesus came to establish on earth. We ask in the name of Christ. Amen.

#### THE LESSON HYMN

"Father of Mercies, in Thy Word." "Studies of Familiar Hymns," page 191.

**EXPRESSIONAL SESSION****WOMAN'S PLACE IN THE PROGRAM OF THE  
KINGDOM**

I Sam. 1:21-28; 2:18, 19

Our Scripture lesson is about one of the godly and devoted mothers of Old Testament times. Hannah had asked God to give her a little son and so when he came into her home she named him Samuel which in the Hebrew language means, "name of God." Hannah had promised God that, if he answered her prayer and gave her a son, she would give the child back to God and he should serve God all the days of his life. Hannah did not forget her promise. She was a devoted mother and made the care of her child her chief task in life. She would not even go to Shiloh to the great feast days until her little boy was old enough to go with her.

When Samuel was still just a little lad, probably four or five years old, his mother brought him up to the place of worship at Shiloh and gave him into the keeping of the old priest, Eli. We are told that he "ministered before Jehovah, being a child, girded with a linen ephod."

Of course the good mother did not forget this little son of hers, though she had given him to God and placed him under the care of the old priest, Eli. She visited him once every year and every time she came she brought him a little robe which she had made. How eagerly she must have looked forward to these yearly visits, and with what care she doubtless beautified that little garment which she was making for her son! With such a mother it is little wonder that Samuel grew up to be one of the strongest and purest men the Hebrew nation ever possessed. Mothers like Hannah have first place in the program of the Kingdom.

**SOME TRUTHS FROM THE LESSONS WE HAVE BEEN  
STUDYING**

Women have had a large and important place in the Christian Church from the very beginning. Their place

is not exactly like that assigned to men, but it is no less important.

A little band of consecrated women furnished the money which made it possible for Jesus and his apostles to give all their time to preaching, teaching, and healing. We can never tell how much good even small gifts may do when they are given in the spirit of loving service.

The band of ministering women who accompanied Jesus were moved to do as they did out of a sense of gratitude. Some of them had been healed by Jesus, others had probably had loved ones saved from suffering or death by the power of Jesus. All had been blessed by the light of truth which Jesus brought to them in his teaching and in all that he did. If we have grateful hearts we will do as these women did, for we have all been blessed by the life and teachings of Jesus.

There were times when the brothers of Jesus and even his mother could not understand him. We must expect to find things in the providence of God which we cannot understand. At such times we will trust and obey. The Christian life is a life of faith.

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Why did Jesus choose only men to be his apostles?
2. How did the work of the women in the company that followed Jesus differ from the work of the men in the same company?
3. What qualities of character are manifest in Mary, the mother of Jesus?
4. Why could not the mother of Jesus always understand her Son?
5. What effect did the resurrection of Jesus have upon his followers?
6. Name some benefits which Christianity has brought to women.
7. Show that women had an important part in organizing the Christian Church.
8. Tell briefly the story of Chundra Lela; of Kapiolani.

## BIBLE VERSES

Prov. 1:8; 19:26; 23:22; Isa. 49:15; Matt. 26:13; Acts 9:36; Rom. 16:1-3; Eph. 6:2; II Tim. 1:5.

## STUDY TOPICS

1. How a Good Woman Saved the House of David from Extinction. II Kings 11:1-16.
2. How a Little Captive Maid Helped Her Master. II Kings 5:1-14.
3. The Story of Esther.
4. The Story of Ruth.
5. The Work of the Women's Missionary Societies.
6. What the Women's Christian Temperance Union Has Done for the World.
7. Forms of Christian Service Open to Women as a Life Work.
8. Great Men Who Have Had Great Mothers (The Gracchi, Lincoln, Washington, Luther, and others).
9. Great Songs Written by Women ("Nearer, My God, to Thee," "Take My Life, and Let It Be," "Thine Forever! God of Love," and Others).
10. The Debt We Owe to Our Mothers.

## PUTTING THE TRUTHS OF THE LESSON INTO PRACTICE

Plan a "Mother's Service" to which all mothers of the congregation are invited. Let the class present white carnations to mothers. Plan mothers' outings for poor families. Have a committee to find out whether there are mothers or women in the community who are in need. Let the class visit the Y. W. C. A. and learn of the work of that organization; find out how the class can help women and girls through coöperating with such organizations as the Y. W. C. A.

CHAPTER III  
PETER THE IMPETUOUS  
WEEK DAY SESSION

PETER IN THE SCHOOL OF JESUS

Matt. 4:18-20; 16:13-20; 26:69-75; John 1:35-51; 6:66-69;  
21:15-23

Jesus chose widely different types of men to become his apostles. He chose a publican who had cared so little for his country and the religion of his forefathers that he had been willing to be a taxgatherer under the Romans. He also chose as a disciple one who had been a member of a fiercely fanatical party called the Canaanæans. Matthew and Simon must have been almost exact opposites in disposition. Jesus was wise in making the selection he did, however, because all types of people are needed in the great task of building God's Kingdom in the world. Moreover, when people differ from one another they are able to help one another; they become complements of one another.

Even the brothers in the company of Jesus were widely different in disposition. Peter was impulsive, quick to act and quick to speak. Andrew, the brother of Peter, was deliberate in all his decisions and his acts. He was thoughtful and resourceful, the very kind of brother Peter needed.

**Peter's First Meeting with Jesus.** John 1:35-51. Peter and his brother Andrew were fishermen and they had as partners a man named Zebedee, with his two sons, James and John. These fisherfolk were not people of wealth, though they owned some property. They were hard-working, honest-hearted people of the middle class.

Peter and John, with their associates, were patriotic and not devoid of religious interest, for they quickly responded to the messages of John the Baptist and







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PETER AND JOHN AND THE LAME MAN AT THE  
GATE OF THE TEMPLE

became his disciples. John's proclamation of the coming of the Messiah stirred the hearts of these fishermen. While the Pharisees were coldly criticizing John and sending delegations to ask him all sorts of questions, these warm-hearted Galilæans had accepted him as a prophet and were eagerly looking forward to the coming Deliverer.

The day after Jesus was baptized, John the Baptist was standing with two of his disciples, Andrew and John, the son of Zebedee. As Jesus passed within sight of the three, John the Baptist said to his two disciples, "Behold, the Lamb of God!" The two disciples understood what John meant; they knew that he had pointed Jesus out as the Messiah whose coming he had been foretelling. Eagerly the two men followed Jesus at a little distance. Jesus turned and, seeing them, said, "What seek ye?" Thus the two became acquainted with Jesus and spent the day with him. Andrew must have been persuaded by that day of fellowship with Jesus that John the Baptist had not been mistaken. He went out and found his brother Simon and said to him, "We have found the Messiah." Then he brought his brother to Jesus. Jesus accepted Simon as one of his disciples and changed his name to Cephas, or Peter.

Peter was just as sure that Jesus was the Messiah as his brother had been, for the very next day he found an acquainttance from his home town and brought him to Jesus. The name of this friend of Peter was Philip and Jesus said to him, "Follow me." Philip was equally prompt in his efforts to bring others to know the Messiah and before the day was over he had brought his friend, Nathanael, to Jesus. So, within a few hours after his baptism, Jesus had with him five of the men who were to be with him through all the days of his ministry.

**Called to Become a Fisher of Men.** Matt. 4:18-20. These five men did not at once leave their customary occupation and spend all their time with Jesus. They returned to their homes and to their fishing. It was not long, however, before they were called away to give all their time to being with Jesus.

One day as Jesus was walking along the Sea of Galilee,

he saw Peter and Andrew casting a net into the water. He called to them saying, "Come ye after me, and I will make you fishers of men." The brothers knew what the call meant and leaving their nets they gladly followed Jesus.

**Faithful to Jesus in the Hour of Adversity.** John 6:66-69.

The multitudes were determined to have Jesus as their king, even if they had to take him and make him king by force. The disciples were probably looking forward eagerly to the time when Jesus would issue a proclamation heralding himself as the Messianic King and they were probably in sympathy with the purposes of the multitude. But Jesus refused to be the kind of king the people wished him to be.

From that time the popularity of Jesus began to wane. Many of his professed followers "walked no more with him." The time came when there were just the twelve disciples and a few others who remained faithful to Jesus. Turning to the Twelve, Jesus said to them, "Would ye also go away?" It was then that impulsive, warm-hearted Peter replied: "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we have believed and know that thou art the Holy One of God."

**The Great Confession.** Matt. 16:13-20. The disciples had at first accepted Jesus as the Messiah on the testimony of John the Baptist. Later, their own acquaintance with Jesus persuaded them that John the Baptist was not mistaken. But months passed by and Jesus did not tell them that he was the Messiah. He did many things which they could not understand. He left undone many things they were sure the Messiah would do. Jesus knew that their decision in the matter must be their very own. He knew that no shallow and hasty conclusion would suffice, that their belief in him as the Saviour of the world must be based on personal knowledge of him and the deepest convictions of their hearts, if it were to stand the terrific testing which was in store for his followers.

At the foot of great Mount Hermon the disciples made their final avowal of their faith in Jesus as the Son of God and Saviour of the world, and Peter was their

spokesman. "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," said Peter, and his words made Jesus glad.

**Peter Denies His Lord.** Matt. 26:69-75. A severe testing of the disciples' faith came immediately after Peter's confession, for Jesus told them that he was soon to be delivered into the hands of his enemies and crucified. This was almost too much for Peter and he rebuked Jesus for saying such things and declared that these things should never take place.

When Jesus was arrested in the Garden, Peter tried to make good his boast that he was ready to die rather than see his Master delivered into the hands of his enemies. He drew his sword and struck out at one of the foremost of the advancing throng, which happened to be the servant of the high priest. Jesus would not permit Peter to continue the fight, however, and so he fled with the other disciples. After a while Peter turned and followed Jesus and his captors to the palace of the high priest. He ventured later into a company of people who were warming themselves about a fire in the court. Here a young girl accused him of being one of the disciples of Jesus. Peter was alone, cold, discouraged, and desperate. He denied that he knew Jesus. Later the accusation was repeated and Peter becoming panic-stricken began to curse saying that he did not know the man.

### AN INDIAN CONVERT WHO FELL AND ROSE AGAIN

Legaic was a chief of the Tsimshian tribe in the north-western part of British Columbia. He was a cruel and bloodthirsty savage and on one occasion had shot down an unarmed and inoffensive Haida Indian in the presence of William Duncan, the missionary stationed then at Fort Simpson. His only excuse was that the chief of the Haida tribe had not shown proper recognition of his rank as chief of the Tsimshians.

On another occasion when Mr. Duncan had refused to close his school at his request, Legaic came into the schoolroom brandishing a knife, and would doubtless have killed the missionary had not a faithful Indian

helper been present, with a loaded pistol to keep the furious chief at bay.

But Legaic gradually grew interested in the Christian faith. The story of Jesus gripped him. He came to the missionary and wished to become a candidate for baptism into the Christian Church.

Mr. Duncan had built up a settlement of Christian Indians at Metlakatla, where they could be protected from the evil influences at Fort Simpson. Legaic came to this settlement to make it his home and to prepare himself for admission into the Church. Perhaps he had not fully understood what he must give up in order to be a Christian. At Fort Simpson he was a chief, but at Metlakatla he was no more than the others. No chieftainships were recognized there. His pagan friends kept urging him to come back and be their chief. They begged him to take part in their pagan dances and religious ceremonials. Legaic had been used to these honors all his life and the wild Indian dances were like second nature to him. He began to attend the dances occasionally. When Mr. Duncan heard of this, he advised Legaic to stop trying to be a Christian and a pagan at the same time and told him to go back to his tribe at Fort Simpson. So Legaic went. He stayed just three days, then he came back to Mr. Duncan's settlement. He looked dejected and broken-hearted. He begged to be allowed to stay and promised never again to take part in the pagan ceremonials. He made good in his resolves. The following year he was baptized and became one of the most earnest workers in all that part of Canada. Through his labors many pagan Indians were led to accept the religion of Jesus.

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## SUNDAY SESSION

### PETER AS AN APOSTLE OF THE RISEN SAVIOUR

John 21:15-23; Acts 2:14-36; 4:1-22; ch. 10

Peter was impulsive and he often made serious blunders. Nevertheless, he was deeply loyal to Jesus as his Teacher and Leader, and he was willing to be taught.

There are great opportunities for spiritual development in any person who is a follower of Jesus and who is loyal to him and anxious to learn the lessons he has to impart. In this lesson we shall see Peter's life and character bearing fruit, because he had learned lessons in the school of Jesus and had become in some measure like his Teacher.

**Peter's Repentance and Restoration.** John 21:15-23. The hours when Jesus was in the tomb were dark and terrible hours for Peter. All his hopes had perished with the Master whom he loved. He had not even been able to give his life in the defense of his Teacher, but had miserably failed and denied his Lord.

Peter had denied his Lord three times. After the resurrection he met Jesus by the Sea of Galilee where three times he solemnly pledged his love and loyalty to Jesus and was given the responsibility and task of feeding the lambs and tending the sheep of the little flock which Jesus was leaving behind him.

**Peter's Great Sermon on the Day of Pentecost.** Acts 2:14-36. The experience of Pentecost made a profound change in Peter. The plans of God became clear to him. He saw how the death and resurrection of Jesus were in exact harmony with all that the prophets had taught. But there was something more than a new intellectual grasp of God's plans in Peter's case; he was also changed in character. He became courageous. He was no longer the weakling who denied his Lord because a girl accused him of being a follower of Jesus. He boldly proclaimed that Jesus was the Messiah for whom the Hebrew people had been praying. He risked his life, when he preached a public sermon in which he said to a multitude of Jewish people, "Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly, that God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified."

**Peter and John Before the Sanhedrin.** Acts 4:1-22. One day as Peter and John were going into the Temple to a service of prayer which was held there every day, they noticed a lame beggar by the gate. This poor fellow, as is the way with beggars, was quick to note anyone who paid him the least attention, having learned that this was a sign that an alms might be forthcoming.

When Peter and John paused to look at him, the lame man eagerly asked for a gift of money. The two disciples had no money to give, but Peter, in the name of Jesus, healed the man of his lameness.

This healing of the lame man brought together a great crowd of people and the disciples seized the opportunity to tell the multitudes about Jesus. Their discourse was interrupted by the coming of a company of priests and Sadducees with the officers of the Temple. The disciples were seized and brought before the high Jewish court called the sanhedrin. The priests had not arrived soon enough, however, to defeat the preaching of the apostles, for many who had heard their words believed and the number of believers was increased to about five thousand.

We are surprised to find that the officials who had been so vigorous in their efforts to destroy Jesus now acted in a hesitating and weak way. This may have been due in part to the fact that the followers of Jesus now numbered more than five thousand people. It was also probably due in part to the notable miracle wrought by Peter and John. The change in their attitude is more largely due, we must believe, however, to the events which accompanied and followed the crucifixion of Jesus. These Jewish leaders had seen the darkness over the earth when Jesus was on the cross. They had felt the earthquake shocks. They had heard the story of the terrified soldiers who had kept watch at the tomb; how an angel had descended and rolled away the stone. They had bribed the soldiers to give another account of the matter, but they could not thus deceive themselves. They knew that the tomb was empty and its emptiness made cowards of them all.

In striking contrast to this timidity of the Jews is the courage of the disciples. At first the leaders could not understand how it could be that these unlettered Galilæan fishermen could have the wisdom to interpret Scripture in such a way as to persuade thousands. They could not understand how these peasants could dare thus set at naught the powers of the times. They talked it over and came to the conclusion that these men had been with Jesus.



**Peter Gains a Higher Air and a Broader View.** Acts, ch. 10. Peter had been brought up as a strict observer of Jewish customs. He had been taught that there were certain kinds of meat he must never eat; that he must be very careful as to his associations with Gentiles; that he must not eat with them, nor enter their houses except under certain conditions. Even after the resurrection of Jesus, Peter still kept up the customs he had been taught as a boy. He was not sure as to just how Gentiles were to become followers of Jesus. He seemed to think that they must first become Jews and learn to keep all the customs which the Jews deemed so important.

It took some special lessons to set these matters right in Peter's mind. One day, as he was sitting on the cool housetop veranda of a friend in the city of Joppa, he fell into a trance. He saw a vision in which a great sheet was let down from heaven. In the sheet were all kinds of animals and birds and other living creatures. Many of these creatures Peter had been accustomed to believe were unclean; that is, that they were never to be eaten by a worshiper of the true God. But now there came a voice saying to him, "Rise, Peter; kill and eat." When Peter protested that he had never eaten anything common or unclean, the answer came back, "What God hath cleansed, make not thou common."

The vision was sent for a purpose. In just a little while messengers arrived from a Roman captain asking Peter to come to his house. Because he had seen the vision, Peter went to the house of this Roman. He preached to the inmates and they received the message, becoming professed followers of Jesus. Thus Peter learned that "God is no respecter of persons."

**Last Days of the Great Disciple.** Jesus had predicted that Peter, when he had grown old, would suffer imprisonment and death for the Christian faith. John 21:18, 19. This prophecy of Jesus seems to have been fulfilled about A. D. 68 when according to traditions Peter was put to death in Rome under the rule of Nero. Before laying down his life for the Christian faith, Peter had labored many years in Asia Minor and perhaps in Italy. Under the influence of Jesus, his life had become

great and useful and the influence of his labors and his character and his writings will never end.

### A MIRACLE OF REDEEMING GRACE

Since this is a true story, we will not call the person concerning whom it is told by his real name. We will call him Charles Bertram. Charles was a young man of unusual ability. During his college course at Yale he so impressed the authorities of the university that they selected him for a professorship in that institution. He was sent to Europe in order that he might attend some of the great schools there in further preparation for his life work.

In Germany he met a daughter of one of America's merchant princes. They became friends and later they were married. Bertram decided to study theology instead of preparing himself for teaching. He spent several years in postgraduate work in some of the largest universities of Europe. Coming back to America, he was made assistant pastor of a large church in New York City. He became a member of many of the leading clubs of the metropolis and was thus associated with many of the famous men of the country. In these clubs liquor was offered freely. Like many of the other members, young Bertram became accustomed to its use.

Called to one of the large churches of his denomination, Mr. Bertram seemed ready to enter upon a most useful and brilliant career. For a time he was highly successful both as a preacher and as a pastor. After a time, however, he found the burdens of his office telling on his strength. He kept a flask of Scotch whisky in his study and found that he felt the need for its stimulating effects more and more. He awoke to the fact that he could neither prepare nor deliver his sermons without the artificial stimulation born of alcoholic drink. He tried to break away, but he found that he was a slave.

One night the young minister told his wife that he was going away for a time; that he would seek out some retired community where he could live quietly and overcome the appetite which had mastered him. In spite of

the protests of his wife and children he went away. He became a school-teacher on the frontier of Canada, but he did not gain the victory he sought. He drifted from one community to another. He became a wandering, drunken tramp, sank into crime, and was sent to a state prison where he spent a term of years. As an ex-convict he came to San Francisco, where he earned a few drinks a day by cleaning cuspidors in the saloons.

One night, a hopeless moral and physical wreck, he entered a mission. He heard the old, old gospel message, he felt the pressure of a kindly brotherly arm thrown about him. He heard words that told him of the way back to God and purity and usefulness, he was saved from the power of evil appetite so that he never again fell before his besetting temptation. The rest of his life is being lived in happy, useful service.

#### THE LESSON PRAYER

Our kind and patient Father in heaven, we know that thou art able to help us when we make spiritual blunders. Even when we are willfully disobedient, thou art persevering in thy efforts to bring us to the better way. Grant that thy goodness may lead us to true repentance for our sins. Give us an increasing victory over every form of evil. Grant that our lives may not be marred by continual moral blundering. Help us to be strong, steadfast, and true. We ask in the name of Jesus, thy Son. Amen.

#### THE LESSON HYMN

“Shepherd of Tender Youth.” “Studies of Familiar Hymns,” page 243.

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### EXPRESSIONAL SESSION

A SOUL'S RECOVERY FROM SPIRITUAL STUMBLING

Psalm 51

Our Scripture lesson is David's earnest plea for restoration and forgiveness after his great sin. Jesus alone lived a perfect life on earth. All others who have sought

for the way of righteousness have had the experiences arising out of spiritual stumbling. They have been under the necessity of repenting, seeking forgiveness, and being restored to the place from which they have slipped. A study of the causes and cures of spiritual stumbling ought to be helpful, therefore, to all who are striving to be followers of Jesus.

### SOME TRUTHS FROM THE LESSONS WE HAVE BEEN STUDYING

It is well for us to remember that Peter denied his Lord after he had been following him from afar. If he had kept close to Jesus, he might have avoided the spiritual downfall which came to him.

One of the most frequent causes of spiritual stumbling is overconfidence in self. Peter was sure that he would never deny Jesus, so sure that he said he would not deny his Teacher even though he had to die with him. Jesus had been praying for Peter that his faith should not fail. Perhaps Peter's self-confidence kept him from praying for himself.

We ought never to give up our efforts to live the Christian life because we make spiritual blunders. On the other hand, we should become more determined than ever in our efforts to become spiritual conquerors. Because a man stumbles and falls on the deck of an Atlantic steamer, it is not necessary for him to fall off the ship.

Spiritual blunders may bring us certain blessings. They make us humble. They help us to overcome undue self-confidence. They may give us a sense of gratitude to God and lead to a closer walk with him. Nevertheless, if we find ourselves making constant spiritual blunders, we should be gravely concerned. No great, strong, and useful life can be built up in that way. Such a life of constant spiritual stumblings would not be a life of much spiritual progress. Too much time and effort would be wasted in recovering lost ground.

Peter denied his Lord once, but ever afterward was true to him. We cannot afford to go on making spiritual blunders again and again.

A spiritual blunder is not an accident, but a choice.

So we have to do something more than get up and try again. We need to repent of the wrong choice and seek the forgiveness of the God against whom we have sinned.

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Why did Jesus choose such different types of men to become his disciples?
2. Tell of Peter's first meeting with Jesus.
3. Why did not Jesus tell his disciples that he was the Messiah?
4. How did the announcement of the approaching death of Jesus affect Peter?
5. What effect did the transfiguration have on the the three disciples who witnessed it?
6. Why did Peter say he did not know Jesus?
7. Tell the story of Legaic.
8. What change did the resurrection of Jesus make in the character of Peter?
9. Tell how Peter gained a broader view of the mission of Christianity than he had ever possessed before.
10. What lesson do you learn from the story of Charles Bertram?

### BIBLE VERSES

Ps. 37:23, 24; Prov. 3:21-23; 16:18; Isa. 5:27; 28:7; 59:9, 10; Micah 7:7, 8; I Cor. 10:12; II Peter 1:10; Jude 24, 25.

### STUDY TOPICS

1. The Council of Jerusalem and Peter's Part in It. Acts 15:1-29.
2. Peter Criticized for Eating with Gentiles. Acts 11:1-18.
3. Spiritual Blunders of the Youthful Jacob. Gen. 27:18-29.
4. Explain What Jesus Meant in John 11:7-10.
5. Some Causes of Spiritual Stumbling.
6. The Cure for Spiritual Stumbling. I John 1:7.
7. How We Stumble in Word. James 3:2.
8. The Danger of Stumbling in Things Apparently Unimportant (Telling "White Lies," Speaking Evil of Those Absent; et cetera).

9. Stumbling from Which There Is No Recovery. Mark 3:28-30.

10. The Christian's Safeguard Against Irretrievable Stumbling. John 10:27-29.

#### PUTTING THE TRUTHS OF THE LESSON INTO PRACTICE

Many of the men and women who have attained to strong and noble Christian character have made it the habit of their lives to review the events of each day just before they give themselves to the slumbers of the night. They have carefully noted the little stumblings of the day. Here a word was uttered which was not quite kind. Here a task was not so well accomplished as it might have been. Here an opportunity to do good was allowed to slip away. These men and women have noted these little failures and have repented of them in this "Quiet Hour" which they spend with God at the close of the day. Then the next morning they have looked forward, determined to learn from the mistakes of yesterday. Thus, little by little they have built up personalities which are modeled after the perfect personality of Jesus.

## CHAPTER IV

### PETER AS A NEW TESTAMENT WRITER.

#### WEEK DAY SESSION

#### PETER'S IDEAS AS TO WHAT THE FOLLOWERS OF JESUS SHOULD BE

#### I Peter, chs. 1 to 3

In addition to his labors as a preacher and organizer of churches, Peter found time to write letters to Christians in lands distant from those in which he was laboring. Two of these letters have been preserved, in the New Testament. Even if Peter had not stated in these letters that he was the writer of them, we might have suspected it. In his letters he shows himself to be the same energetic and impulsive person that we have come to know in the Gospel narratives. He is no longer, however, the weak and changeful person who once denied his Lord. He has become strong through his fellowship with Jesus and through years of labor in the service of his Master.

Jesus seems to have seen these possibilities in Peter from the first. At their first meeting Jesus had said to him, "Thou art Simon the son of John: thou shalt be called Cephas." The name Cephas, which in its Latin form is Peter, means a stone. Jesus seems to have known that this apparently fickle-minded fisherman was capable of becoming an immovable foundation stone on whom he could build his Church and his Kingdom. Even when he knew that Peter would soon deny him, Jesus still kept his faith in his disciple. He had prayed that Peter's faith might not utterly fail in the hour of trial, and he said to Peter, "When once thou hast turned again, establish thy brethren," Luke 22:32. As we read these letters of Peter we see that the confidence of Jesus was not misplaced when he chose Peter and held to him perseveringly in spite of Peter's many stumblings.

**Peter Was a Bible Student.** These letters of Peter show us that Peter was a student of the Bible. His

writings are full of Scripture quotations. He quotes passages from Leviticus, Isaiah, the Psalms, and The Proverbs, as well as from certain books which are not now regarded as a part of the Bible, and are called the Apocrypha. It is almost certain, also, that he was familiar with Paul's letter to the Romans and to the Ephesians, as well as The Epistle of James. Peter's ready quotations from the Old Testament are probably due to the fact that as a boy he had committed long passages of Scripture to memory and had continued to study these passages all his life. His familiarity with portions of the New Testament shows that he was abreast of the times and eager to gather information from all available sources.

Without attempting an extensive study of these letters of Peter, we will try, in this lesson, to gather out some of the things he has to say to the Christians of his day on the subject of "What a Follower of Jesus Ought to Be."

**Happy and Hopeful.** I Peter 1:3-12. Although the people to whom Peter wrote were undergoing "manifold trials," Peter nevertheless, urged them to rejoice. The ground for this great rejoicing, Peter says, is the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. After Jesus had risen, it was impossible for Peter to be really unhappy any more, and he sees that if these Christians in distant lands really believe in the resurrection of Jesus and catch its full significance, they, like him, will be able to rejoice, no matter what their circumstances may be. This happiness, Peter says, belongs to all Christians and not merely to those who have seen Jesus in the flesh. Love for Christ and faith in him are the great essentials for the gaining of true Christian happiness.

**Obedient and Pure.** I Peter 1:13-25. Peter goes on to point out that this happy hope of the Christian must of necessity be accompanied by purity of life and obedience to Jesus Christ. Nothing less than perfect obedience and entire purity of life is worthy of those who have been "redeemed, not with corruptible things, with silver or gold, from your vain manner of life handed down from your fathers; but with precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, even the blood of Christ."



**“A Holy Priesthood.”** I Peter, ch. 2. In this second chapter of his letter Peter tells the Christians of his day that they have a high and holy task. In Old Testament times the priests stood between the people and God, representing all the people in acts of worship and praise and leading the people to a knowledge of the Almighty. Just so, Christians, having come to a larger and truer knowledge of God than other peoples of the earth, stand between these peoples and the Almighty as their representatives, charged with the responsibility of making God known.

It was felt in Old Testament times that the priests should be godly men. So must Christians, as the new priests, put away “all wickedness, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings.” Christians should be hungry for spiritual growth. Christians should live faultless lives so that those who are not followers of Christ may be won through the godly living of his disciples. Christians should be good citizens. Peter admonishes the Christians of his day to “honor all men; love the brotherhood; fear God; honor the king.”

**Christianity in the Home.** I Peter 3:1-7. In the early days of Christianity, difficult situations often arose when one member of a household became a Christian and all the other inmates of the home remained pagans. Conditions were especially trying when the wife became a Christian and the husband remained an idolator. Peter gives some kindly advice to Christian women whose husbands had not accepted Christianity. He urges such women to remain subject to their husbands and to live so unselfishly that their husbands may, through their manner of life, be persuaded of the truth of the Christian religion. Christian husbands are to manifest the same unselfish spirit toward their wives.

And this spirit of the Christian home is to spread abroad throughout all the Christian community. Christians are to be “all likeminded, compassionate, loving as brethren, tenderhearted, humbleminded: not rendering evil for evil, or reviling for reviling; but contrariwise blessing.”

HOW A FRAGMENT OF THE BIBLE LED TO THE FOUNDING  
OF A UNIVERSITY

A good many years ago there lived in Japan a boy named Shimeta Neesima. His parents were Buddhists and a long row of idols was given an honored place in their home. Every day the parents of Shimeta brought food and drink to these idols and worshiped them. Shimeta noticed that the idols never ate the food brought to them, nor did they drink the wine left before them every day. He determined to see whether these idols were really gods or were only ugly wooden images. So he took one of them and buried it in the garden. He was sure that if the idol were really a god it would never stay there in the earth. When, a little later, he found the idol still in the ground, he determined that he would never worship wooden images again.

Shimeta was in danger of growing up to be a disbeliever in all religion since he had lost faith in the religion of his forefathers, but providentially, just at this time, some one gave him a fragment of the Bible. It was only a small part of the book of Genesis and, moreover, it was in the Chinese language. Shimeta began to read it as best he could. The very first sentence arrested his attention: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Here was a new view of the universe for the Japanese boy. He could believe in a God like that. He heard that there were a few copies of the Bible in English somewhere in Japan, but he did not know where to find them, neither could he read the language in which they were printed. Moreover, the laws of Japan in that day made the reading of the Bible an offense punishable by death.

But Young Neesima determined to know what was in this wonderful Book. He ran away and found refuge on board an American vessel in one of the harbors of Japan. From the sailors on the ship he learned to speak English fairly well. After a time the ship sailed into Boston harbor. A godly merchant named Alpheus Hardy heard of the Japanese boy and his eagerness to learn American ways. He took an interest in the lad, sending him to school and finally to Andover Theological Seminary.

When he had completed his studies, Neesima returned to Japan. He had long dreamed of founding a great Christian university in his native land, but he expected many obstacles to such an undertaking. He persevered in his efforts, however, until the foundations of Doshisha University were laid at Kyoto.

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## SUNDAY SESSION

### RECOLLECTIONS OF JESUS IN THE LETTERS OF PETER

I Peter 2:21-25; II Peter 1:13-18

Peter had lived on very intimate terms with Jesus for more than three years. He had heard his great discourses to the people. He had seen his miracles of healing. He had seen Jesus on trial for his life and led away to be crucified. He had seen the risen Saviour. What did he think of Jesus? What events in the life of Jesus stood out most vividly in the mind of Peter after all the years? What had the fellowship with Jesus meant to Peter?

**Jesus Was Central in the Thoughts and in the Preaching of Peter.** It is evident that the personality and the work of Jesus were the central theme in all of Peter's preaching. He speaks of the eternal existence of Jesus, saying that he was "foreknown . . . before the foundation of the world." He speaks repeatedly of the glory of Christ. Five times Peter speaks of Jesus as the Saviour. Twice he speaks of Jesus as the Shepherd of souls. Several times the exaltation of Jesus is mentioned, likewise his power and his coming again to earth. It is evident that thoughts of Jesus filled the mind of Peter, that he found in the personality and the teachings of Christ all the message he needed to comfort the Christians to whom he was writing, to strengthen their hearts, and to make them glad in their times of affliction.

**Peter Remembered the Death of Jesus.** I Peter 2:21-25. Peter may have been present at the crucifixion of Jesus, for he says in these letters that he was "a witness of the sufferings of Christ." He mentions the death of Jesus

eight times; more often, indeed, than any other event in the Gospel narratives. It is certain that Peter believed that the death of Jesus was necessary to the salvation of the world. Through his death, Jesus had suffered, the innocent for the guilty, and had so brought about the salvation of all who believe in him and accept him as Saviour and Lord.

A recollection of Jesus before the sanhedrin is probably recorded in Peter's words, "who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously." A memory of the cruel scourging is seen in the words, "by whose stripes ye are healed."

**Peter Remembered the Resurrection of Jesus.** I Peter 1:3-5. Peter looked upon the resurrection as a new birth for himself and all the followers of Jesus, a birth into a joy which was incorruptible and full of glory. It was the preaching of a risen and living Saviour that stirred the people of the early centuries of the Christian Church. It is well for us to keep in mind this great fact and its significance. We must not omit from our creed those sublime words: "The third day he rose again from the dead."

**Peter Remembered the Transfiguration of Jesus.** II Peter 1:16-18. In his second letter Peter was writing to people who had begun to waver in their faith. False teachers had been among them claiming that they possessed new truths about which the disciples of Jesus had not known. As Peter seeks to assure these wavering ones, so that their faith in Jesus will remain steadfast, he thinks of an experience of his own which helped him to settle in his mind once for all the fact that Jesus is the Messiah and the Revealer of the truth of God. He remembers that night on great Mount Hermon when he and the two sons of Zebedee saw Jesus glorified and when they heard the voice of God out of the cloud saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." So Peter writes to these wavering Christians, saying, "For we did not follow cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the

Father honor and glory, when there was borne such a voice to him by the Majestic Glory, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased': and this voice we ourselves heard borne out of heaven, when we were with him in the holy mount."

**Peter Remembered Certain Predictions of Jesus.** II Peter 1:13-15. It is thought that Peter wrote his Second Epistle shortly before he was put to death. He seems to have felt that his earthly life was soon to end. He has remembered through all the years those solemn words of Jesus spoken by the Sea of Galilee, "When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not." Perhaps it was a good thing for Peter to know all through the years the end which awaited him. It seems to have made him diligent and thoughtful for the good of others. There is a spirit of noble heroism in these words of Peter as he calmly faces the end of life and realizes that he must work while it is day: "And I think it right, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance; knowing that the putting off of my tabernacle cometh swiftly, even as our Lord Jesus Christ signified unto me."

### JOHN WYCLIF WHO FIRST TRANSLATED THE BIBLE INTO ENGLISH

To John Wyclif belongs the honor of having first published the entire Bible in English. Most of the work of translation was done by Wyclif himself, but a friend of Wyclif's, named Nicholas of Hereford translated portions of the Old Testament. Wyclif was the pastor of a church in a little town called Lutterworth. He believed in giving the people all the truths which the Bible contains and his sermons were such powerful gospel appeals that he soon attracted attention all over England.

It was not long before there was serious opposition to Wyclif, but he was a born fighter and he did something more than defend himself. He assailed boldly the errors of the Roman Church. He took part in a

bitter controversy which had been waged for many years between the kings of England and the pope. The Roman Church claimed the right to exact certain revenues from the English people. This claim was denied by most of the English kings. Wyclif declared that the English Church was in no such state of dependence upon Rome as the popes claimed. This courageous stand of Wyclif won him the support of some of the leading people of England.

It became the great ambition of Wyclif's life to give the English people the Bible in their own language. Such an undertaking was branded as an outrage by the Church leaders of that day. They said that Wyclif was a traitor to the Church because he was trying to give the Bible into the hands of the "ignorant laity." They said that if this undertaking succeeded the Bible "would be made common and more open to laymen and even to women than it was wont to be to clergy well learned and of good understanding, so that the pearl of the gospel would be trodden under foot of swine." Wyclif faced his enemies fearlessly and told them that he did, indeed, intend to bring it about that the plowboys of England should know more of the Scriptures than they knew.

The enemies of Wyclif were powerful. They finally won over the king and most of the nobility to their side. They brought Wyclif to trial. As Wyclif arose to face the tribunal, a strange thing happened. The hall began to tremble and the walls were shaken and cracked. A wild outcry of fear went up from all London for it was being shaken by a great earthquake. Many of the people cried out that this was a sign that Wyclif was a righteous man and that the trial should cease, but Archbishop Courtenay cried out: "No! We will not give up the trial." He declared that the earthquake meant that Wyclif was a wicked heretic and that the Church was about to be purged of his presence and his teachings.

Wyclif was condemned and excommunicated, but his life was spared. He was allowed to return to his quiet retreat at Lutterworth. There he went back to his manuscripts and his work of translating the Scriptures into English. Wyclif expected that he would sooner or

later be executed, but he labored on to complete his great work. Soon after it was completed, he was stricken with palsy and died. Forty-four years after the death of Wyclif there was a great council of the Church held at Constance. This synod ordered the bones of Wyclif to be dug up and burned and the ashes to be thrown into the river Swift which, "runneth hard by the church at Lutterworth." In the words of Fuller: "This brook did convey his ashes into the Avon, Avon into the Severn, Severn into the narrow sea, and this into the wide ocean. And so the ashes of Wyclif are the emblem of his doctrine, which is now dispersed all the world over."

### THE LESSON PRAYER

We thank thee, our heavenly Father, that we can read the Bible in our own language. We thank thee for the heroic men who wrote the Scriptures and the heroic men who gave them to us in our own tongue. We ask thee to bless the agencies which are printing the Bible and sending it abroad throughout all the world. We ask thee to bless those who teach the Scriptures in colleges and universities. Help our Sunday schools to be efficient in the teaching of the Scriptures. Teach us how to study the Bible in the right way and give us strength and courage to live up to the high ideals which it teaches us. We ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

### THE LESSON HYMN

"How Firm a Foundation, Ye Saints of the Lord."  
 "Studies of Familiar Hymns," page 37.

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## EXPRESSIONAL SESSION

### A CHRISTIAN'S USE OF THE BIBLE

#### Psalm 119

We have as our Scripture lesson the longest chapter in the Bible. There are twenty-two divisions in this chapter and each is named after a letter of the Hebrew

alphabet. Each section contains eight verses which makes one hundred and seventy-six verses in all. Note that each verse is a statement about the Bible, for the various terms, such as "law," "testimonies," "statutes," all refer to the Bible. Think of it; one hundred and seventy-six separate statements about the greatness and value of the Bible and yet no statement a repetition of any other! And yet the Old Testament poet who wrote this psalm did not have such a wonderful Bible as we have. He had less than half of the Old Testament—just the first five books, perhaps, and a few others—with none of the New Testament books. This poet had no account of the marvelously perfect life of Jesus, no letters of Paul and the other apostles, and yet he sings the praises of his Bible in a wonderful song.

#### SOME TRUTHS FROM THE LESSONS WE HAVE BEEN STUDYING

Peter was familiar with the Old Testament and with such portions of the New Testament as existed in his day. This knowledge helped him to be a more efficient worker for Christ than he could have been without it.

Peter probably had no idea that his letters would finally become a part of the Bible, but, with a sincere desire to help his fellow Christians in their times of trial and danger, he did the best he could. Thus does God often take the results of men's labors and give them a place and a purpose far beyond the ends which his servants have in view.

The reading of the Bible made a profound change in the life of the Japanese lad, Neesima. The Bible is capable of making just as great changes in the life of every citizen of Japan, or of any other nation, as it made in the life of Neesima. How important then to give the Bible an opportunity in the world!

The life of Peter was strong and helpful because his mind was filled with recollections of Jesus and his heart with love for Jesus.

Wyclif was honoring the Bible when he sought to put it in the hands of all the people. His adversaries claimed to have so great a respect for the Bible that they could



not bear to have common people read it. In reality they dishonored the Bible by their narrow views and their unbrotherly conduct.

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How do we know that Peter really wrote the two epistles ascribed to him in the New Testament?

2. Find some verses in Peter's letters which are quotations from the Old Testament.

3. What, according to Peter, is the great source of Christian happiness and hope?

4. What did Peter mean when he called Christians "a holy priesthood"?

5. Name some ways in which the Christian home differs from homes which are not Christian.

6. Name some of the events in the life of Jesus which are mentioned by Peter in his letters.

7. What does Peter believe about the death of Jesus? (Its effect, necessity, importance.)

8. What place did Peter give to the resurrection of Jesus in his preaching?

9. Why does Peter mention the transfiguration of Jesus in his letter to people who were wavering in their faith?

10. In what ways are Peter and Paul alike? In what ways unlike?

### BIBLE VERSES

All the Bible verses for this session are taken from the One Hundred and Nineteenth Psalm.

1. Youth's Best Guide. V. 9.

2. A Safeguard Against Sin. V. 11.

3. Wondrous Things for Those of Spiritual Vision. V. 18.

4. Source of Wisdom and Delight. V. 24.

5. Driven to the Bible by Affliction. Vs. 67, 71.

6. Source of Knowledge. Vs. 98-100.

7. Bible Light. Vs. 105, 130.

8. Bible Comfort. V. 143.

9. Bible Peace. V. 165.

10. The Way Back to God. V. 176.

## STUDY TOPICS

1. How Jesus Used the Bible to Overcome Temptation. Matt. 4:1-11.
2. How Jesus Used the Bible to Answer Doubting Critics. Matt. 22:23-33.
3. How Jesus Used the Bible to Teach His Disciples Religious Truths. Luke 24:25-28.
4. What Peter Believed About the Inspiration of the Bible. II Peter 1:21.
5. Paul's Ideas Concerning the Value of Bible Study. II Tim. 3:14-17.
6. Ancient Bible Manuscripts. (See "How We Got Our Bible," Smyth, page 11.)
7. My Favorite Bible Verses and Why I Like Them.
8. "How the Bible Was Written and Preserved." (See "Our Reasonable Faith," Miller, page 35.)
9. Best Methods of Private Bible Study. (This topic may be taken by the pastor of the church or some other person of experience in Bible study.)
10. The Story of the King James Version of the Bible. (See any good Church History.)

## PUTTING THE TRUTHS OF THE LESSON INTO PRACTICE

Have pupils sign pledges to read the Bible daily. Let the class take part in some such work as that of the American Bible Society.





*Burnand*

PETER AND JOHN RUNNING TO THE TOMB

## CHAPTER V

### THE DISCIPLE WHOM JESUS LOVED

#### WEEK DAY SESSION

##### A YOUNG AND TEACHABLE DISCIPLE

John 1:35-40; Luke 9:49-56; Mark 10:35-45;  
Matt. 18:1-4

John had a great advantage over Peter and most of the other disciples in that he was young and capable of learning new ways of life readily. We must remember, however, that if John had not had a willing mind, he would not have learned much even under the Great Teacher. John was willing to learn and being young he made rapid progress and ultimately grasped more fully than any other disciple the significance of the personality and teachings of Jesus. John is the best interpreter of Jesus, because he came to know his great Friend early in life, was deeply devoted to him, and lived in obedience to him throughout a long and useful life. In John's life the precious morning hours had not been wasted.

**John's First Meeting with Jesus.** John 1:35-40. Like Peter, John had been a disciple of John the Baptist. He had thus been under training for service in the Kingdom even before he met Jesus. John was one of the two disciples to whom the Baptist pointed Jesus out calling him the "Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world." He and Andrew then followed Jesus and on his invitation went home with him. That is, they went to the place where Jesus was staying while he was attending the preaching services which John was carrying on. It may have been only a temporary booth made of the branches of trees. John never forgot that first day he spent with Jesus. When he was an old man he wrote the Fourth Gospel and he still remembered the exact time of day when he first met Jesus; he tells us "it was about the tenth hour."

**A Young Man Rather Narrow and Intolerant.** Luke

9:49-56. It was not an unmixed advantage to John that he was young. He had many things to learn. His experience had not been wide. He had youthful enthusiasm, but he sometimes used it unwisely. One day he saw a certain man curing demoniacs by speaking over them the name of Jesus. Now John imagined that this man had no right to do such a thing, because he was not a disciple of Jesus. So he told the man that he must not use the name of Jesus to effect cures any more. Afterward he told Jesus about what he had seen and what he had said to the man who was healing demon-possessed people. It would have been much better for John to have consulted Jesus before commanding the man to stop healing, but he was young and acted hastily. His loyalty to Jesus was fine, but he used it in a wrong way. Jesus said to John, "Forbid him not: for he that is not against you is for you."

On another occasion Jesus and his disciples were passing through Samaria on their way to Jerusalem. They came to a Samaritan village. Jesus had sent some of his disciples on ahead of the main party that they might find lodgings there for the night, but when Jesus arrived those who had gone ahead into the village reported that the Samaritan people would not allow them to lodge in their village. The fact that Jesus and his disciples were going toward Jerusalem awoke the ancient hatred which had been growing between Jews and Samaritans for some centuries. The Samaritans maintained that Mount Gerizim and not Mount Zion was the place where the center of the worship of Jehovah ought to be. Because of this narrow prejudice and because they saw that Jesus and his disciples were going to Jerusalem, the villagers refused Jesus and his disciples food and shelter. This was really a very serious breach of etiquette for in Oriental countries there is a customary hospitality far beyond anything with which we are familiar in our land.

James and John were very angry at this insult to them and their Teacher. They wished to call down fire from heaven that the Samaritans might all be consumed. They had read about Elijah calling down fire to consume his enemies and they had seen enough of the power of Jesus to believe that he could destroy the whole village

if he chose to do so. Jesus rebuked his two disciples for suggesting such a thing and then they went on to the next village.

**A Young Man of Selfish Ambitions.** Mark 10:35-45. It is a good thing to be ambitious if one's ambition is of the right kind, but if one's ambition is narrow and selfish, it may be a curse to the one who possesses it and also to the world. James and John had become disciples of Jesus expecting him to set up a temporal Kingdom. They had dreams of the places of honor and power which they would occupy in that Kingdom. They were so anxious about it that they finally decided to approach Jesus with a request that they be given the highest places in the Kingdom when it was set up.

They knew that Jesus loved them and that they stood high in his estimation. They would take advantage of this friendship of their Teacher to advance their own interests. Moreover, they tried to trap their Master into promising them that which they desired before he knew the nature of the request. They decided to say to him, "Teacher, we would that thou shouldest do for us whatsoever we shall ask of thee." They planned to have their mother accompany them that she might use her influence in persuading Jesus to grant the request.

Their plan failed because Jesus met their request with a straightforward inquiry as to what they wished him to do for them. So they told him about their desire to sit next to him in his Kingdom. We can read compassion and love in the answer of Jesus. He said to them: "Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink the cup that I drink? or to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" They said that they were able, but Jesus told them that while it would come to pass that they should drink of his cup and be baptized with his baptism, yet he could not promise them that they should sit next to him in the Kingdom. Jesus was talking of things which his disciples could not fully understand as yet. To them, to sit next to Jesus, meant honor and power and authority over their fellows. Jesus knew that to sit next to him meant to be like him in character.

When the other disciples heard about this request of the two sons of Zebedee, they were angry. Serious misunderstandings and divisions might have resulted had not Jesus called the company of the disciples together and talked with them earnestly and kindly concerning what it meant to be great in the Kingdom which he was seeking to set up. His Kingdom was not to be like the kingdoms of the Gentiles where rulers lorded it over their subjects. Whosoever would be great in the Kingdom of God must become the servant and minister of his fellow men, not their ruler and official superior.

**A Lesson John Had to Learn.** Matt. 18:1-4. There were other occasions when this matter of who was to be the greatest in the expected Kingdom occupied the minds of the disciples. Once when they asked Jesus about it, he answered their question by calling a little child to him and placing him in their midst. Then he said to them, "Verily I say unto you, Except ye turn, and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven." It took the disciples a long time to learn that lesson. They had to get rid of their narrow and selfish ambitions. They had to become humble and teachable. They had to learn that to be in the Kingdom meant to be something rather than to have something.

**"The Disciple Whom Jesus Loved."** John 21:20. John does not mention his own name anywhere in his Gospel. He speaks of himself as "the disciple whom Jesus loved." It was not egotism that caused John to choose this title for himself. He did not mean, we may be sure, that Jesus loved him more than the other disciples. It was a humble and modest way of speaking of himself, as though the only thing which gave him any right to appear in the account of the life of Jesus was the fact that Jesus loved him.

#### A HAYSTACK PRAYER MEETING

Near the campus of Williams College, Williamstown, Massachusetts, there stands a modest monument which consists of a globe mounted on a pedestal. On one side of the monument there is engraved the figure of a haystack and the following words:



## THE FIELD IS THE WORLD

The Birthplace of  
American Foreign Missions  
1806

Samuel J. Mills  
James Richards  
Francis L. Robbins  
Harvey Loomis  
Byram Green

The monument marks the spot where, in August, 1806, five students of Williams College took refuge under a haystack from an approaching thunderstorm. These young men had gone out that afternoon to talk and pray together. They had felt the call to carry the gospel into lands where it had never been preached before. At that time there was not even one American foreign missionary in any country. They prayed together, these five boys, asking God to create in our country an interest in the great enterprise upon which Jesus had started his disciples so many centuries ago. They asked God to use them in his own way to further the cause which lay upon their hearts.

That little prayer meeting under the haystack marked the beginning of American foreign missions. To it can be traced directly the establishment of the missionary enterprise in Asia, Africa, and the Hawaiian Islands. Three foreign missionary societies resulted directly from it. Even a nation had its beginning as a result of the haystack prayer meeting, for a number of years later Samuel Mills went as a missionary to the west coast of Africa and there organized a colony for Christian Negroes. This colony later became an independent nation, and is now called Liberia.

One hundred years after the haystack prayer meeting the Laymen's Missionary Movement was organized as a memorial of that little gathering which had proved to be the beginning of such great things for the advancement of God's Kingdom throughout the world. "The power of the sun," said Samuel B. Capen, "will be measured with a yardstick sooner than the results of the haystack meeting by statistics."

**SUNDAY SESSION****GROWING MORE LIKE JESUS WITH THE PASSING  
OF THE YEARS**

John 19:25-27; Acts 5:25-42; 8:14-25; Rev. 1:9-11

We have seen in the previous lesson that John had some serious faults. He was narrow in his sympathies. He was unworthily ambitious. He was selfish enough to wish the place of greatest honor in the Kingdom for him and his brother. He was not quite honest, or he would not have tried to entrap his Master into promising him first place in the Kingdom. His thoughts were of place and honor and prominence for himself rather than of service for his fellow men. In this lesson we are to learn how all these faults were gradually overcome through his fellowship with Jesus. The longer he lived the more John became like his great Teacher.

**By the Cross of Calvary.** John 19:25-27. If John ran away with the other disciples when Jesus was arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane, he must have soon after turned and followed the crowd which had seized Jesus, for we are told that he was present at the trial of Jesus in the palace of the high priest. He was known to the high priest and must have been known therefore as a disciple of Jesus. It took no small amount of courage for John to come into the place where Jesus was on trial for the danger to his life was very real.

We hear of John again on Calvary when Jesus was crucified. He was there with the company of faithful women who had followed Jesus from Galilee. Jesus, seeing the disciple whom he loved standing by the cross, said to his mother, who was also near, "Woman, behold, thy son!" Then he said to John, "Behold, thy mother!" From that hour John looked upon Mary as his adopted mother and he took her to his own home. Thus one of the last acts of Jesus was securing a home for his mother and giving her into the care of his beloved disciple and friend.

**A Fearless Preacher of the Gospel.** Acts 5:25-42. John was associated with Peter in the early days of the Christian Church. They went together to preach to the

people. They were arrested and tried before the sanhedrin. Both John and Peter were in grave danger of their lives when they were seized the second time by the Jewish leaders, but they were saved by the intervention of Gamaliel, who advised a more moderate policy than the other leaders seemed inclined at first to pursue. Both were cruelly beaten, however. As they were set at liberty they were warned not to speak any more in the name of Jesus, but "every day, in the temple and at home, they ceased not to teach and to preach Jesus as the Christ."

**Ministering to Samaritans.** Acts 8:14-25. The persecution of the Christians scattered them abroad over all the land bordering upon Judea. In this way Philip came to be in Samaria and to preach the gospel there.

When the apostles who were in Jerusalem heard that the Samaritan people were responding to the gospel as it was being preached to them by Philip, they determined to send Peter and John into Samaria. So these two disciples went through many of the villages of Samaria preaching the gospel, and many of the Samaritans became followers of Jesus. Thus John became one of the first foreign missionaries of the Church for he was sent among a people who were looked upon by the Jews as foreigners. The power of the religion of Jesus to obliterate race prejudices and international ill will is clearly seen in the willingness of Peter and John to become missionaries to the Samaritans. It was not very long before this that neither of these disciples would have cared to have any dealings with Samaritans; not very long before this John had wished to burn up the people of a Samaritan village, with fire brought down from heaven.

**Alone on the Isle of Patmos.** Rev. 1:9-11. After his mission to Samaria, John returned to Jerusalem, where he remained for many years. These were times of bitter persecution of the Church in Judea, and especially at Jerusalem, and John seems to have held steadfastly to his post in spite of perils on every hand. When Paul had completed his second missionary journey he visited Jerusalem and there met Peter, James, the Lord's brother, and John. Paul says that the three persons we

have named were "reputed to be pillars" in the church at Jerusalem.

John later moved to Ephesus where he had the oversight of a large district in western Asia Minor. Perhaps the seven churches to which he addressed the book of Revelation were under his supervision. During one of the bitter persecutions which broke out against the Christians, John was banished to a lonely island called Patmos. While there he had certain spiritual experiences which enabled him to write the last book of the New Testament.

The election of Nerva to be emperor of Rome brought the persecution of the Christians to an end, for the time being, and John was allowed to return to Ephesus. There he lived to extreme old age. Some of the greatest men of the Early Church were pupils of John while he lived at Ephesus. Among these were Polycarp, Papias, and Ignatius.

**A Lover of Children.** I John 2:1-6, 12-14. You will remember that once when John and some of the other disciples were disputing about who should be counted greatest in the Kingdom of heaven, Jesus took a little child and set him in the midst of them and said: "Except ye turn, and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven." Matt. 18:3, 4. As we read John's tender message to little children, we are convinced that he had met the conditions laid down by his great Teacher. He had childlike humility; he had entered into the true Kingdom of heaven.

**Noble Ambition.** I John 2:15-17. All the selfish and unworthy ambition had been eliminated from John's character. He was no longer dreaming of a temporal kingdom as he penned the following lines: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the vainglory of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of

God abideth forever." In his youth, John had dreamed of a high place of power and honor for himself in an earthly and temporal kingdom. Experiences of life and his fellowship with Jesus had shown him the treasures of the true and eternal Kingdom.

### AN OUTCASTE BOY OF INDIA

Damaru's ancestors for many generations had belonged to the lowest class in India. They were beggars and outcastes. The cruel caste system of India condemned poor little Damaru to the same kind of life which his forefathers had lived. He was bright and ambitious, but there seemed to be no possible chance of his ever making anything of himself. No schools were open to him. The proud Brahman boys and other boys of castes lower than the Brahmans would have nothing to do with Damaru. They would not think of sitting down to eat with him. Indeed, if Damaru's shadow so much as fell across the table, the boys would all rise and throw the food away to the dogs.

When Damaru was still just a young lad, a great famine fell on India. The customary rains did not come. In a little while the food was all gone, or had become so scarce and high-priced that poor people could not obtain anything to eat. The low-caste peoples, being poor, were, of course, first to suffer. Damaru's parents died of starvation. He himself was reduced to little more than a skeleton and he became so weak that he could no longer walk.

Just in time to save his life he was found by some famine relief workers and taken to a place where thousands of children were being cared for. He was given food and clothing, and in a little while was stronger and plumper than he had ever been before in all his life. The kindness of the Christian men and women of the relief station was a great riddle to Damaru. Here were people who not only gave him food and clothing and tender care, but who did not refuse to sit at the same table with him, and who did not throw away every particle of food his hands had touched.

When Damaru grew well he was taken to the Sunday

school and the church services which were conducted at the relief station. As he learned to read from his New Testament and heard his teachers telling about the Great Teacher who had taught and lived a life of universal brotherhood, things began to become plain to him. "Ah," said he, "I see why it is that the Christian people are willing to take in a poor, outcaste boy like me and sit at the same table with him. It is because Jesus, their Teacher, showed them that all men are brothers."

And so Damaru came to love the religion which taught people to treat him as though he were of some use in the world. He became a member of the Christian Endeavor Society at the city of Damoh. Later he attended a Bible school in India and is now pastor of one of the native Christian churches. He has proved himself to be an earnest and faithful minister of Jesus.

### THE LESSON PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, we would remember thee in the days of our youth. We would be grateful to thee, for all the opportunities which thou hast placed before us in the pathway of life. Guide us into ways of service and spiritual development. Teach us to use our time in the right way so that we may accomplish something for thee. Show us the folly of living selfishly and for the pleasures of the present moment. Give us worthy ambitions and may we pursue them patiently and earnestly all our days. We ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

### THE LESSON HYMN

"Lord, with Glowing Heart I'd Praise Thee." "Studies of Familiar Hymns," page 51.

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## EXPRESSIONAL SESSION

SEEING JESUS AS HE IS AND BECOMING LIKE HIM

I John 3:1-3; II Cor. 3:18

The two passages of Scripture chosen as the basis of this lesson are much alike. One was written by the dis-

ciple whose life we have been studying; the other was written by the Apostle Paul. Both speak of the gradual changing of the character of the true believer into the likeness of the character of Jesus. Both writers were speaking, in large measure, from their own observations and personal experiences. We have seen how the character of John took on the qualities of his great Teacher. When we study the life of Paul we find that in his character, too, profound changes took place after he became a believer in Jesus as the Saviour of the world. No one who is familiar with the life of John the disciple, and who has read understandingly the wonderful narrative of the life of Jesus which he wrote, and has caught the spirit of his three simple but beautiful epistles, and has been stirred by the sublimity of his letter to the seven churches, can fail to see that John had seen Jesus and had become like him. Perhaps John saw Jesus, that is, understood his character, more clearly than any other of the disciples. Yet John realized that his own understanding of the character of Jesus was as yet, imperfect. He looked forward to a distant day when he should really see Jesus as he is and should be really like his Master.

#### SOME TRUTHS FROM THE LESSONS WE HAVE BEEN STUDYING

John became like Jesus in courageous devotion to duty. Rather than abandon the task which God had assigned him, he suffered banishment to a lonely island and was willing to suffer death for the Church of Christ.

John became like Jesus in his unselfishness. As we read his letters we are convinced that his great concern was for the good of others. He had lost sight of self in his devotion to a great cause.

John became like Jesus in his sympathy. He became, like his Master, a friend of little children. His Second Epistle is written to a woman and it is a model of Christian courtesy. John does not forget after expressing salutation to "the elect lady" to add the words, "and her children."

John became like Jesus in his ambitions. He tells us that he wrote his account of the life of Christ that all

who read it might believe that Jesus is the Christ and that believing they might have life through his name. This statement expresses admirably the one great ambition which came to possess the disciple's soul.

John became like Jesus in his spirit of service. He came to a time when he was glad to go and preach to the Samaritans whom he had once despised.

John became like Jesus in his enjoyments. Jesus greatly rejoiced and gave God thanks when his disciples were successful in the mission of preaching and healing on which he had sent them. John writes to a friend of whom he has heard good reports and says, "Greater joy have I none than this, to hear of my children walking in the truth," III John 4.

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What advantage was it to John that he was the youngest disciple among the Twelve? Was his youth any disadvantage?
2. Tell of John's first meeting with Jesus.
3. What incidents show us that John was at first rather narrow in his sympathies?
4. Tell of the request John and his brother made regarding their place in the Kingdom.
5. Tell the story of the haystack prayer meeting.
6. How did John show his courage at the trial of Jesus?
7. How did he show his courage in the early days of the Church?
8. What books of the New Testament are thought to have been written by John?
9. In what respects did John become like Jesus in character?
10. Tell the story of Damaru, the outcaste lad of India.

### BIBLE VERSES

John 15:5; Acts 4:13; Eph. 3:11-15; Phil. 3:8-11, 13, 14; I Peter 2:21; I John 2:29; 3:24; 4:10, 11; Rev. 3:12.



## STUDY TOPICS

1. "In His Steps" To-Day (A Review of Charles M. Sheldon's Book).
2. If Jesus Were a High-School Student To-Day, What Kind of Student Would He Be?
3. Some Things Jesus Would Not Do if He Were a Business Man To-Day.
4. Some Things Jesus Would Do if He Were a Business Man To-Day.
5. Why an Early Decision for the Christian Life Is a Matter of Great Importance.
6. Elements of Paul's Character Which Are Due to His Fellowship with Jesus.
7. Incidents in the Life of Peter Which Show that He Learned to Be Like His Master.
8. What a Person Must Do to Become Like Jesus in Character.
9. If We Do Not Become Like Jesus, Shall We Not Necessarily Become More and More Unlike Him?
10. What It Really Means to Sit at the Right Hand of Jesus in His Kingdom.

## PUTTING THE TRUTHS OF THE LESSON INTO PRACTICE

Let all members of the class try for one week to solve every problem which they meet in the home, the school, or in their hours of recreation by asking, "What would Jesus do, under these circumstances?" Have pupils write out, and hand in for class discussion, unsigned accounts of experiences they have had in thus solving problems.

## CHAPTER VI

### MESSAGES FROM THE WRITINGS OF JOHN WEEK DAY SESSION

#### A LETTER WHICH JOHN WROTE TO THE CHRIS- TIAN OF HIS DAY

##### The First Epistle of John

Our Scripture lesson is the whole of the short First Epistle of John. John probably wrote this letter at about the same time he wrote his Gospel. It is thought that the two writings of John, this letter and his Gospel, may have been circulated among the churches at the same time. The primary aim of the letter is to confirm the followers of Jesus in their faith that Jesus is God's eternal Son and the Saviour of the world. Certain false teachings were arising which cast doubt upon the fundamental truths of the Church. John vigorously combated these errors.

**How John Had Come to Know Jesus.** I John 1:1-4. John begins his letter in the same way that he begins his Gospel. He speaks of the eternal existence of Jesus. It seems as though this disciple who was so intimate with Jesus and who understood him better, perhaps, than any of the other disciples, could not think of Jesus in any other way than as the eternal Son of God. In his opening sentence, John gives us some of the ways in which he has become acquainted with Jesus. He had heard him. He heard him preach the Sermon on the Mount. He heard him speak to lepers and outcasts when he was moved with compassion for them. He heard him pray to God on the Mount of Transfiguration and in the upper room in Jerusalem. John had seen Jesus. He had seen him heal the sick and raise the dead. He had seen him after he had come forth from the sepulcher of Joseph. John tells us that he had not only seen Jesus with his eyes, but that he "beheld" him. That is, he not only saw Jesus, but he also pondered on the acts and

words of Jesus. John says that he touched Jesus, that his "hands handled" him. There are certain truths which can be best learned by a hearty handclasp. John had leaned upon the bosom of Jesus and looked up into his eyes.

With all these sources of information John had come to know Jesus intimately and his conclusion is that Jesus is the eternal Word of God, that the life of God has in Jesus become manifest to mankind. The beloved disciple had taken it as his life task to make this Saviour known to the world. He wrote this letter that others might have such fellowship with God and with God's people as he himself had come to enjoy.

**The Gospel Message in a Few Sentences.** I John 1:5-10. In these verses John summarizes the whole of the gospel message. First of all, the message which Jesus brought to the world was a message concerning the nature of God. The pagan gods were gods of darkness. Those who worshiped them believed that the gods were like men in hatred of one another and in crimes against one another. Jesus revealed a God of infinite purity and perfect righteousness.

The gospel message not only reveals a God of light, but it also reveals the conditions under which men can have fellowship with God. We must "walk in the light, as he is in the light" if we are to have fellowship with God. Sin is the great hindrance to man's fellowship with God. The gospel tells how this hindrance may be removed. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." This cleansing is dependent, in some way too deep for us to understand fully, on the death of Jesus on the cross. It is the "blood of Jesus his Son" that "cleanseth us from all sin."

**Messages to Little Children.** I John 2:1-17. John had become like Jesus in his love for little children and in his appreciation of the importance of the children in God's plans. He had come to see that the redemptive work of Jesus was not confined to the rescue of individuals out of lives of sin. He knew that Jesus had come to save from sin as well as to save out of sin. John did not believe that it was necessary for all people to

go far astray, before coming to know the fellowship of God. Therefore his message to little children is, "My little children, these things write I unto you that ye may not sin." The gospel of Jesus is a message concerning preservation from sin, as well as a message concerning rescue out of sin.

**The Source and Power of Christian Love.** I John 4:7-21. This is one of the greatest passages of the New Testament on the subject of Christian love. The only other passage which can compare with it is the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians. John begins with an admonition, "Beloved, let us love one another." He tells us why we should love one another: "love is of God; and every one that loveth is begotten of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love." The supreme manifestation of God's love was given when he sent his Son to be the Saviour of the world. This measureless love of God puts us under obligations, "Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another." John could not endure the hypocritical actions of some people of his day who claimed to love God very much, but who showed by their deeds that they loved their fellow men very little. He spoke very plainly to this class of people, "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, cannot love God whom he hath not seen."

**The Place of Faith in the Life of the Christian.** I John 5:1-12. This closing chapter of John's First Epistle contains one of the great New Testament passages on the subject of Christian faith. It is worthy to rank with the eleventh chapter of Hebrews as a statement of the place and importance of faith in the life of a Christian. John teaches that faith in Jesus as the Christ is the source of the new birth. "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is begotten of God." But John shows that he is thinking of faith, not as a cold intellectual assent to a proposition, but as a warm and loving response of the whole person to the personality of Jesus, a love which includes God and all that are children of God.

John thinks of faith in Jesus as the source of that cour-

age and perseverance which insure spiritual victory. "This is the victory that hath overcome the world, even our faith. And who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?"

Lack of faith in Jesus as the Son of God is a serious offense to the Father. Can friendship exist between two persons when one of them says to the other, "I do not believe a word of what you are telling me"? So John says, "He that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he hath not believed in the witness that God hath borne concerning his Son."

### THE TRAPPER BOY

In the heart of a West Virginia mountain, three miles away from the daylight, sits a little lad busy at his task. Perhaps we shall be interested in him the more when we know that he bears the name of the great disciple who, like his Master, was a friend of the children. The lad's name is John, and his task is to open and close a great iron trapdoor in the mine so that the coal cars can pass up and down. John wears clothes that are old, ragged, and dirty. In his old greasy cap there is a little smoking oil lamp, and that is all the light he has during his hours of labor—almost all the light he knows, for it is usually past sunset when he reaches the surface, and the sky is usually too overcast with smoke for him to see the stars.

John is fond of birds and often wishes that he could go out into the fields and watch them and hear them sing. He seizes every chance to increase his knowledge of birds, but the opportunities are few. He finds a piece of chalk somewhere and uses the big iron trapdoor as a blackboard. On it he draws pictures of birds, all the different kinds he has learned to know. He plays that these birds are alive, and over the pictures he has written the words, "Please do not scare the birds." This is all the fun he has.

## SUNDAY SESSION

## TWO LETTERS WHICH JOHN WROTE TO HIS FRIENDS

## II John; III John

The First Epistle of John was evidently written to be circulated among the Christian churches of the time. In writing it John labored better than he knew for his letter has been a blessing and a help to churches and to individual Christians, not only in the time when John lived but for nearly two thousand years since his earthly life came to an end.

The other two epistles of John were evidently written with even less thought of their becoming a part of the New Testament. They are just short personal letters which John wrote to his friends. One is addressed to a woman and her children, the other to a man who was a friend of John. These letters are well worth our study. They help us to understand, better than we otherwise could, the character of John. The writer of these letters was certainly a kindly and courteous Christian gentleman. They help us to understand the diligence of the apostle. He not only preached and taught and wrote material intended for general circulation among the churches, but he also carried on the same sort of work by private correspondence. Perhaps these two short letters are only samples of many letters which John wrote to his friends, encouraging them in their efforts to do the will of God and warning them against the subtle errors which were menacing the Church.

The amount of good a person can do by letter-writing can hardly be measured. There is an organization known as "The Order of the Golden Pen." It has no officers, no constitution and by-laws, no meetings. All that is required for membership is that a person shall make it a practice to write three helpful letters each week. Some of these letters are written to comfort those in sorrow, some to congratulate those who have come into the possession of some great joy, and some are letters of counsel to those in perplexity. Thus a member of the order would write one hundred and fifty-

six such letters in a year. John may not have followed exactly this plan but it seems certain that he possessed the spirit of the Order of the Golden Pen.

**The Salutation of a Christian Gentleman to a Friend.** II John 1-3. John courteously expresses his love and respect for the lady to whom he is writing and assures her that this sentiment is not confined to him alone, but that it is shared by "all they that know the truth." It may be that this lady was one to whom the false teachers had made advances and who was in danger of being led astray. Perhaps that is why John wrote to her. False doctrines are very subtle and doubtless in that day, as well as in our day, many of the very brightest and most useful Christians were led astray by these errors and their lives thus rendered unfruitful.

How skillfully John brings in the matters concerning which he wishes to speak to his friend! Even in his salutation, he reminds her that she has a host of friends who are devoted to the truth as it is revealed in Jesus. He reminds her that the truth revealed by Jesus is deep within the life of the true believer and that it is something which will last forever. Grace, mercy, and peace are God's gifts through Jesus Christ. Such a salutation must have caused this friend of John's to stop and think, if she was indeed being tempted to depart from the truth as it is revealed in Christ.

**Commendation and Warning.** II John 4-11. If a person has some definite things to say, which ought to be said and which may not be altogether pleasant to the person addressed, it is well to lead up to the saying of these things by commending some action or characteristic of the person addressed. This method of approach is both skillful and courteous. After his words of salutation, John comes to the real business of his letter. His purpose in writing the letter is to put this friend on her guard against certain false teachers. Possibly this woman looked on these false teachers as her friends. She may have entertained them in her home. As much is suggested by what John writes a little further along. John compliments this friend because some of her children are "walking in truth." Evidently not all of them were so conducting themselves, but John passes over

that fact and mentions only those who were loyal and true to the teachings of Jesus. John reminds his friend that the central commandment is a commandment to love one another and that this commandment is "from the beginning."

Then John comes out with plain words of warning. Many deceivers are abroad in the land. They deny that Jesus Christ has really come and lived the life of a man on earth. The whole structure of the Church is endangered. He gives his friend a rule whereby she may judge concerning the new doctrines which are being put forth. John is not an obstructionist. He realizes that there must be and ought to be progress in the religious beliefs of the Church. Perhaps he has in mind the words of Jesus, "When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall guide you into all the truth," John 16:13. And so John writes to this friend saying, "Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teachings of Christ, hath not God." It is not the going onward that is condemned, but the failure to abide in the teachings of Jesus.

John closes the subject by warning his friend that she ought not to receive into her house one of these false teachers, for in so doing she would become a partaker in evil works.

**A True and Loyal Friend.** III John 1-4. One can hardly read the salutation in this letter of John to a friend without realizing that the writer was a warm-hearted Christian gentleman, wholly loyal and true to those whom he could claim as his friends. John is writing to a man in this letter, consequently we find a certain freedom from the restraint which marked the letter which he wrote to a woman. What a hearty salutation, "The elder unto Gaius the beloved, whom I love in truth"! John tells Gaius that he has been praying that he may prosper and be kept in good health. He has heard good news concerning Gaius and hastens to write congratulating him, and telling him how glad it has made him to learn that his child is "walking in truth."

**Christian Hospitality.** III John 5-8. John especially commends Gaius for his hospitality in receiving certain Christian teachers who had come to the community in



which Gaius was living. Gaius had received these brethren kindly and they in turn had reported to John, telling him of the faithful services of Gaius in the church of which he was a member. John urges his friend to continue his good work of receiving hospitably these wandering teachers of the Christian religion, and tells him that he will be doing a further service if he forwards these brethren on their journey in a worthy way. He probably means that Gaius may well give these traveling missionaries of the cross such financial assistance as he can, and that in so doing he will become a fellow worker with them in the task of building Christ's Kingdom in the world.

**A First Century Trouble Maker.** III John 9-12. There was in the church of which Gaius was a member a certain man named Diotrephes who seems to have had some sort of grudge against the disciple John and was doing a great deal of slanderous talking about him. This Diotrephes had refused to receive the traveling missionaries of whom John speaks. Moreover, he was so unfriendly toward them, perhaps because they were friends of John, that he forbade anyone else to receive them and threatened to put out of the church anyone who disobeyed his commands.

John sees in this trouble maker a person who is essentially self-centered. He is making a disturbance because he is determined to be at the head of the church of which he is a member. His disturbances among the brethren are due to the fact that he "loveth to have the preëminence among them." On the other hand, John commends a certain Demetrius who had "the witness of all men, and of the truth itself."

### THE YOUNGEST WAGE EARNER IN NEW YORK CITY

The National Child Labor Committee recently made an investigation of the tenement home industry in New York City. Into the dingy tenements of the East Side of New York City, work of various kinds, such as little children can do, is brought. Garments are made by the mother and older children, but certain parts of the work are done by children who are under four years of age.

They pull out basting threads, for instance, or put together the parts of artificial flowers. The rents are so high, and the wages paid the workers so low, that it is necessary for every member of the family to take some part in the earning of a living.

This committee found many very young children who were confined to this painstaking labor practically the whole of their waking hours. They were especially impressed by the case of a little girl called Marietta, the daughter of foreign-speaking parents. She was so young that she could not tell what time it was by the clock. She was engaged in putting together the minute parts of artificial flowers. The flowers she was assembling were forget-me-nots; the petals of which are very small. The little girl had not learned to count, but she had learned to select the right parts of each flower and to put them together in order. The task required a constant eyestrain and a nervous tension which no child ought to undergo.

Examining the flowers the child was making, the members of the committee found that each flower was made up of three parts which the little girl was expected to string together on a tiny paper-covered wire. They examined a pile of flowers which the child had made in one day and counted them. There were five hundred and forty. This meant that the small fingers had handled that day sixteen hundred and twenty separate pieces and strung them by passing the paper-covered wire through a hole in each tiny piece, a hole hardly large enough to admit a cambric needle.

For this baby's day of labor, the family received five cents. And the flowers were being sent out to sell for large sums of money. Some one was growing wealthy through profits derived from the labor of little Marietta and hundreds of other children like her.

### THE LESSON PRAYER

O God, we know that thou art righteous and just. Through thy servants the Hebrew prophets thou didst speak condemning all forms of oppression and injustice. Thou hast shown us in thy Son the better way of service

and helpfulness. Yet the world has never learned to walk in the way that thy Son walked. Selfishness and lack of brotherliness are still everywhere abundant. Help us, as we take up the work of the world which will soon fall upon us, to lift the life of our times to higher standards. Help us to labor unselfishly and ardently that we may do something toward the building of a Kingdom of justice and brotherhood on earth. Amen.

### THE LESSON HYMN

“Onward, Christian Soldiers.” “Studies of Familiar Hymns,” page 107.

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## EXPRESSIONAL SESSION

### CHILD LABOR IN AMERICA

James 5:1-6

In our Scripture lesson, James speaks forcefully of the curse which wealth earned by oppression and injustice ultimately brings upon its possessor. There were evidently a good many people in that day who were anxious to get rich quickly and who did not care how they secured their wealth. They were willing to defraud their employees. They bought their labor in the cheapest market. They did not care whether the wage they paid was enough for a decent living or whether it was not. They never stopped to ask whether the wage they paid those who worked for them was a just proportion of the product of their employees' labor. They took every opportunity to escape the payment of wages at all if they thought they could keep the pay back by some fraudulent claim.

James evidently thought that the Christian Church ought to condemn such oppression and greed. He thought that the religion of Jesus ought to raise up friends for all who suffered injustice, friends courageous enough to defend those who were not able to defend themselves. We cannot doubt that James would have said some plain things about child labor conditions in our own country.

### SOME TRUTHS FROM THE LESSONS WE HAVE BEEN STUDYING

John included little children in his letters because he knew their value to the great cause in which he was so deeply interested. He knew that the Christian Church could never conquer the world if it neglected the children. He had learned the lesson from his great Leader who said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me."

John knew that preservation is better than rescue. He wrote to little children that he might save them from going astray into lives of disobedience to God. He would have been a bitter enemy to any influence which causes children to come under the danger of sin.

John believed that even young children may know God in a very real way. He says in his first letter, "I have written unto you, little children, because you know the Father." John would have been in favor of a large and effective program of religious education for children and youth, if the matter had been under discussion in his day.

John was on the watch for anything which might lead childhood away from the pathway of virtue and truth. He wrote to a friend and her children warning them against certain false teachers who were abroad leading many people away from the truth as it is revealed in Christ. We may be sure that, if John were living to-day, he would be on his guard watching every enemy of child life.

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What is the primary aim of The First Epistle of John?
2. Name some of the ways in which John had come to know Jesus.
3. What is John's idea as to who Jesus is?
4. Name some of the important items in John's summary of the gospel message. I John 1:5-10.
5. Name two great New Testament passages on the subject of Christian love. Compare them.
6. What does John have to say about the place of faith in the Christian life?

7. What characteristics of John are shown in his two brief letters to his friends?

8. What rule for judging new doctrines does John give in his second Epistle?

9. From John's letters what troubles do you think existed in the early Christian Church?

10. What do you think John would say about child labor such as that shown in the stories of the trapper boy and Marietta?

#### BIBLE VERSES

Lev. 19:13; Deut. 24:14, 15; Isa. 1:16, 17; Jer. 22:13, 14; Amos 8:4-6; Micah 2:1, 2, 9; Zech. 8:5; Mal. 3:5; Luke 18:15.

#### STUDY TOPICS

1. Jesus' Concern for the Rights and the Safety of Children. Matt. 18:1-6, 10-14.

2. Right Kinds of Child Labor. (School tasks, home chores.)

3. Wrong Kinds of Child Labor. (Factory work; Work Injurious to Growth and Health of Body; Work Involving Moral Dangers.)

4. Child Labor Laws of Our State. (A lawyer may be asked to attend the meeting and speak on this subject.)

5. The Life of a Newsboy. (See page 79, in "Missionary Programs and Incidents," by Trull. It will be valuable for the one taking this topic to make a study of the conditions among newsboys in his community if there are any there.)

6. The Life of a Bootblack. (See page 80, in "Missionary Programs and Incidents," by Trull.)

7. The Coal-Breaker Boys. (See page 82, in "Missionary Programs and Incidents," by Trull.)

8. The Effect of Factory Work on the Physical Development of Children. (A physician may be asked to attend the meeting and speak on this subject.)

9. Ought We to Buy and Use Articles Manufactured and Sold by Those Who Are Making Large Profits Through Child Labor?

10. "The Children of the Mills," by Ella Wheeler Wilcox (Have the poem recited by a pupil):

They no longer shout and gambol in the blossom-laden fields,  
 And their laughter does not echo down the street.  
 They have gone across the hills; they are working in the mills,  
 Oh, the tired little hands and aching feet!  
 And weary, dreary life that stunts and kills!  
 Oh, the roaring of the mills, of the mills.

All the pleasures known of childhood are but tales of fairyland.  
 What to them are singing birds and rushing streams?  
 For the rumble of the rill seems an echo of the mill,  
 And they see but flying spindles in their dreams.

In this boasted land of freedom they are bonded baby slaves,  
 And the busy world goes by and does not heed.  
 They are driven to the mill just to glut and overflow  
 Bursting coffers of the mighty monarch, Greed.  
 When they perish we are told it is God's will,  
 Oh, the roaring of the mill, of the mill.

#### PUTTING THE TRUTHS OF THE LESSON INTO PRACTICE

Appoint a Committee on Child Labor. Have this committee write to The National Child Labor Committee, 105 E. Twenty-second St., New York City, for information concerning child labor conditions in the several states. If conditions in the local community are such as to make it desirable, have a study of child labor conditions there. An opportunity may arise for the class to help by circulating petitions or in other ways.

## CHAPTER VII

### ANDREW, A FAITHFUL MAN OF AVERAGE ABILITY

#### WEEK DAY SESSION

#### TWO BROTHERS WHO HELPED ONE ANOTHER

Mark 13:1-8; John 1:35-42; 6:1-14; 12:20-36

The differences of character among the disciples were not confined to individuals who had lived such different kinds of lives that wide differences of character would be only a natural result. We should expect Matthew the publican to be a very different kind of man from Simon the Cananæan. Simon Peter and Andrew were brothers, yet no two men among the Twelve seem to have differed more greatly from each other. It sometimes happens so with brothers. We have studied the character of Peter in a recent lesson. In this lesson we are to study the character of Peter's brother, Andrew, and we shall find that in most respects the brothers were opposites in disposition. Yet these two brothers were very intimate. They move together in brotherly fellowship through the Gospel narratives. They were able to help each other because they differed the one from the other. When Jesus sent out his apostles, two by two, to preach and to heal, Peter and Andrew were sent out together.

**A Humble Flame Lights a Torch Which Illumines the World.** John 1:35-42. In most ways Peter was a far greater man than Andrew. It is probable that Andrew could never have preached such a sermon as Peter preached on the Day of Pentecost. Peter was a man of more than average native ability while Andrew was quite evidently a man of only mediocre ability. And yet if it had not been for Andrew, Peter might have failed to become a disciple of Jesus. To Andrew belongs the honor of having been one of the first two disciples of Jesus. Like John, Andrew had been stirred by the

preaching of John the Baptist and had become a disciple of John. When the Baptist pointed out Jesus, calling him the Lamb of God, Andrew and John heard the words of their teacher and they followed Jesus, became acquainted with him, and, believing that he was the Messiah, became his avowed disciples.

The first thing Andrew did after his day's visit with Jesus was to go out and find his brother, Simon Peter. Andrew said to his brother, "We have found the Messiah." Then Andrew brought his brother to Jesus and Jesus accepted him at once as one of his disciples, having evidently seen the great possibilities lying dormant in this Galilæan fisherman. Compared with Peter, Andrew was only a humble light in the world, but we must remember that it was his enthusiastic announcement and his entreaties which brought Peter to Jesus. His humble flame lighted a torch which has illumined the world.

**An Honest Fisherman.** Matt. 4:18-20. Andrew, like Peter his brother, was a fisherman of the Sea of Galilee. He and Peter were in partnership with Zebedee and his two sons, John and James. Everywhere in the Gospel narratives, Andrew appears as one of those honest sons of toil who are the salt of the earth in every age. He knew little of the Pharisaic learning of the day and was wholly free from Pharisaic hypocrisy. He had an open and honest mind which was unspoiled by prejudice.

**A Patriotic Citizen.** Mark 13:1-8. With the exception of Judas, the disciples of Jesus were all intensely patriotic. Judas from the first seems to have loved himself more than he loved his country. As for the other eleven disciples, they were full of enthusiasm for their country. They longed to see it free again as it had been in the glorious days of David and Solomon. They believed that the Hebrew nation was to rise to a position of rulership over the nations of the earth. Even after the resurrection of Jesus, they still clung to these patriotic hopes and said to him, "Lord, dost thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?"

One day Jesus and his disciples were going out of the Temple and some one of the disciples said to Jesus,



“Teacher, behold, what manner of stones and what manner of buildings!” Of a truth the stones were very great in size and Herod’s Temple was a building of splendor and magnificence. The Jews were justly proud of it and the disciples shared in this pride. But Jesus saw that this was the time to give his disciples a little glance into the future. They must learn that the true greatness of a nation does not consist in magnificent buildings but in righteousness among its rulers and its people. With a tone of deep sadness in his voice Jesus said to his disciples, “Seest thou these great buildings? there shall not be left here one stone upon another, which shall not be thrown down.”

The disciples were surprised and saddened by the words of their Teacher. But it was only Peter, James, John, and Andrew who afterward came to Jesus and asked him to explain the statement which he had made. They wished to know when the things which Jesus had mentioned would come to pass and what sign they should expect when the words of Jesus were about to be fulfilled. Possibly it was the intense patriotism of these four which led them to interview their Teacher on the subject.

**A Resourceful Man.** John 6:1-14. Andrew was a good kind of man to have around in a time of emergency. He was resourceful. He was calm and usually had stored away in his mind bits of information which were very much needed. An illustration of these traits of Andrew’s character is seen in the account of the feeding of the five thousand. Jesus had asked Philip where the bread could be secured with which to feed the multitude before they departed for their homes. In a state of mind bordering on consternation, Philip had replied, “Two hundred shillings’ worth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one may take a little.” But it was Andrew who knew just how much food was present in the company and who had it. He remarked in his shrewd way, “There is a lad here, who hath five barley loaves, and two fishes: but what are these among so many?”

**A Friendly Adviser.** John 12:20-36. One day, toward

the close of the ministry of Jesus, some Greeks who were in Judea to attend the feast of the passover, came to Philip and asked him if they might see Jesus. These people from a distant land had in some way become worshipers of Jehovah. They had heard, too, of the great Teacher from Galilee and they longed for a few moments of conversation with him before they returned to their homes. "Sir, we would see Jesus," said these courteous foreigners to Philip. The name, Philip, is a Greek name, and that may be why this particular apostle was sought out by these Greeks. It has been suggested that Philip may have been part Greek, but of this we have no evidence.

Philip was evidently perplexed. He did not know whether he ought to take these Greeks to see Jesus, or whether it would be better to refuse their request. He sought the advice of his friend, Andrew. Philip and Andrew were from the same town and it is probable that Philip had formed the habit of asking his friend's advice in times of perplexity. Andrew gave the right kind of advice and the Greeks had the opportunity they so much desired. They not only saw Jesus, but he talked with them and gave them some of the most profound statements of truth contained in the New Testament. It would surely have been a blunder to refuse the Greeks, and we may thank Andrew for the fact that we have this account in the Gospels.

#### JOHN G. PATON, MISSIONARY TO THE SOUTH SEA ISLANDS

Some sixty-five years ago there sailed away from Scotland a young man bound for the South Sea Islands as a missionary. His name was John G. Paton and he was one of the first missionaries to a large group of islands lying northeast of Australia. It was nearly ten years before the teaching of Paton began to have any marked influence over the natives. The story of how heathenism finally gave way before the gospel is one of the most dramatic in missionary history.

On the island of Aniwa, where Paton had established his headquarters, there was only one small pond where the people could get drinking water. In times of abun-

dant rain there was plenty of water in this little pond, but in times of drought it became almost dry. Certain native medicine men claimed jurisdiction over this uncertain water supply. They claimed that they could cause rain at any time they chose, likewise that they could cause the rains to fail at any time. They thus extorted gifts from the superstitious populace.

Mr. Paton determined to sink a well in the island in hopes that he might find fresh water. The old chief advised him not to try so foolish an undertaking. He assured the missionary that rain came down from heaven and not up out of the earth. He told him that if he should by chance find water by digging, it would be sea water, and he would fall through into the ocean and be eaten by the sharks. Mr. Paton could not be turned from his purpose by any of these arguments. He knew, nevertheless, that he ran certain risks in undertaking to dig a well. If he failed to find water, or found only salt sea water, the natives would lose all faith in him and would be slow to accept his teaching on matters of religion.

When the well reached a certain depth, a fine supply of fresh, cool water was found and the astonishment of the chief and his people was boundless. The finding of water in the earth was to them a miracle. They brought their wooden idols and their idols of stone and cast them down at the missionary's feet. The old chief gathered his people about him and addressed them thus: "Something here in my heart tells me that the Jehovah God does exist, the Invisible One, whom we never heard of nor saw until the missionary brought him to our knowledge. . . . The gods of Aniwa cannot hear, cannot help us, like the God of the missionary. Henceforth I am a follower of Jehovah God."

## SUNDAY SESSION

## "ANDREW, SIMON PETER'S BROTHER"

Matt. 10:1-23; Acts 1:6-14

The writers of the New Testament often speak of Andrew as the brother of Simon Peter. Peter was so well known that they take it for granted that those to whom they write have heard of him. But with Andrew the case is different. They identify him by connecting his name with that of his more famous brother. Perhaps this is as Andrew would have wished it to be, for all the accounts we have of him indicate that he was a modest and humble man. He was quite evidently free from the selfish ambition which characterized the disciple John at the beginning of his fellowship with Jesus. Such men as Andrew are greatly needed in the world and in the Church—men who will take second place and make good in it, men who are willing to do their best in the task assigned them, even though they are known only as "Simon Peter's brother."

**Andrew in the School of Jesus.** Matt. 10:1-23. When Andrew heard the call of Jesus, "Come ye after me, and I will make you fishers of men," he left his nets lying on the beach and followed Jesus. From that moment he was a pupil in the school of Jesus. He seems to have been a model pupil. He was eager to learn. We have seen how he and three other disciples came to Jesus asking him to explain what he had said about the destruction of Herod's Temple. He was friendly and peaceable. We have seen how James and John stirred up trouble among the disciples by their selfish request that they should have the chief offices in the kingdom. We have no reason to believe that Andrew ever entertained such selfish hopes. On the other hand, he was decidedly helpful and the other disciples fell into the habit of going to him as a sort of Ways and Means Committee. It is a good thing for a school to have a number of Andrews in it. Andrew's attitude toward his Teacher was, so far as we are told, always an attitude of respect and obedience. This cannot be said of his brother, Peter. When Jesus told Peter that before the crowing of the

cock he would deny that he knew his Teacher, Peter still insisted that he would do no such thing. On one occasion Peter took it upon himself to rebuke Jesus for certain things which Jesus had said. We can hardly think of Andrew as speaking to Jesus in the way Peter did.

**His Brother's Keeper.** It is easy to imagine that when Simon Peter and Andrew were boys at Bethsaida on the shores of the Sea of Galilee, Peter would be reckless, always running risks; Andrew would be forever cautioning his more venturesome brother. Peter needed Andrew to hold him steady; Andrew needed Peter to stir his more sluggish soul to activity.

This relation of helpfulness continued far into their manhood years. Peter married and moved to Capernaum, where he had a house. Andrew, too, left Bethsaida and accompanied his brother to Capernaum. The two brothers lived in the same house. They evidently owned it in partnership, for Mark calls it "the house of Simon and Andrew." They owned their fishing nets together and they were working side by side, casting their nets into the sea, when Jesus called them to be disciples. It is easy for us to believe that in this close fellowship the brothers were very helpful to each other, and that Andrew's action in going first to his brother with the glad tidings concerning the finding of the Messiah was not an isolated incident but an illustration of his constant habit of fellowship and helpfulness. It is a significant fact that when Peter committed his most grievous blunders, such as denying his Lord, Andrew was not by his side. Perhaps if he had been there the result might have been different.

**With the Other Disciples After the Resurrection of Jesus.** Acts 1:6-14. Andrew was one of the witnesses to the resurrection of Jesus. He was with the other disciples when Jesus bade them farewell on the Mount of Olives and he was also present at the gathering in the upper room in Jerusalem after the ascension of Jesus. Here we find the name of Andrew mentioned for the last time in the New Testament. He was, however, with the company of the disciples on the Day of Pentecost

for we are told that "they were all together in one place." Moreover, Jesus had commanded his followers to tarry in Jerusalem until the Holy Spirit should come upon them and we know that Andrew would have been obedient to this commandment of Jesus. Andrew was still with the other disciples when the first deacons were chosen by the growing Christian Church, for we are told that "the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them," and made arrangements whereby the deacons should be chosen. Acts 6:1-6.

It is probable that Andrew went away to some other field of labor soon after the time of the great persecution which broke out after the stoning of Stephen, although he evidently remained courageously in Jerusalem until the worst of the persecution had passed. We are told that "they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judæa and Samaria, except the apostles," Acts 8:1. A little later in the same narrative we are told that "the apostles that were at Jerusalem" sent Peter and John on a mission tour through Samaria. The language seems to indicate that only a part of the apostles were at that time in Jerusalem. Possibly some had already been sent out on missions through Judea similar to that on which Peter and John were sent. Andrew, therefore, may not have been one of the company at the time when Peter and John were sent into Samaria.

**A Missionary to Distant Lands.** We have now followed Andrew as far as we can in the New Testament narratives. Certain traditions concerning him have come down to us from the early centuries and while they may not be exact history, they are probably founded on facts. To the north of the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea there lies a vast, level country which in ancient times was called Scythia. Its inhabitants were wild barbarians who now and then came swarming forth from their ancestral abode and swept southward and westward destroying everything in their path. It is said that Andrew became a missionary to these wild northern barbarians, that he made his abode with them for many years, and introduced Christianity among them.

Another tradition states that Andrew later returned

from Scythia and took up mission work in northern Greece where he perished in one of the persecutions against the Christians. He is said to have been crucified on a cross shaped like the capital letter X. This kind of cross is, therefore, called the Cross of St. Andrew.

### A NEGRO CONVICT WHO PROVED THAT HE WAS WORTH SAVING

Joe Stebbins was a Negro lad in a certain city of Georgia. He had never known what it is to have a real home, for his father was dead and his mother was a poor drunken creature, the worst character in her part of the town. It is little wonder that Joe early fell into vicious habits and at the age of sixteen found himself a member of the chain gang, mending the streets of the city by day and sleeping in a dingy cell at night.

One day this convict lad was working on a street in front of a large brick building where a school for colored boys was being conducted. He saw well-dressed Negro boys going into the building with books under their arms. He wondered whether he could learn to read if he had a chance. He thought how fine it would be if he could be dressed like the boys in the school and could sit in the cool schoolroom and study instead of being kept out on the hot streets pounding rocks.

The matron of the school saw the Negro convict's wistful glances and determined to see what she could do for him. She finally secured his release and he became a member of her school. She paid his fine and gave her promise for his good behavior in the future. The Negro boy had found a real friend and he determined to be worthy of the confidence of the good woman who had rescued him from the chain gang. He studied diligently. He learned to know of the great Friend who came to teach a universal brotherhood, became a noble Christian man and is living a useful life. He studied medicine, and his days are spent ministering to the needs of his race. He has proved that he was worth saving, even though he was a member of the chain gang.

## THE LESSON PRAYER

We thank thee, God our Father, for the spirit of universal brotherhood which has come to the world through the example and the teaching of Jesus. We pray that the people of our land may solve in the right way all questions growing out of the relationships of races to one another. We know that they can be solved in the right way if we follow the teachings of thy Son and have a large measure of his spirit. Amen.

## THE LESSON HYMN

“God Bless Our Native Land.” “Studies of Familiar Hymns,” page 179.

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## EXPRESSIONAL SESSION

## CHRISTIANITY AND THE RACE PROBLEM IN AMERICA

John 4:1-42

Our Scripture lesson is a good illustration of the attitude of Jesus toward the outstanding race problem of his day. The hatred between Jews and Samaritans was extremely bitter. It had been growing for hundreds of years. It was due not only to differences in racial ancestry, but to differences on matters of religion and to national jealousies. Most Jews would not set foot on the soil of Samaria if they could avoid it. The Jews of Galilee used to cross the Jordan River just below the Sea of Galilee, pass down the eastern side of that river, cross it again in the neighborhood of Jericho, and then climb the long hill up to Jerusalem rather than go directly from Galilee through Samaria to Jerusalem. Having attended the festival in Jerusalem, they would return to their homes by the same circuitous route. Jesus, of course, would make no such concession to race hatred. “He must needs pass through Samaria.” The language indicates that he insisted on a direct route from Jerusalem, through



Samaria, to Galilee, and that the disciples expressed some objection to the route proposed.

In asking the Samaritan woman for a drink of water, Jesus again disregarded the false etiquette of his day. No Jewish rabbi would have thought of doing such a thing. Later, Jesus spent two days in the village of Sychar, living among the Samaritans and teaching them. In doing this Jesus showed no disloyalty to his own nation and the race with which he was so closely related. He knew that the Jews had a larger measure of the truth than had the Samaritans. He told the woman by the well that the Jews knew what they worshiped, whereas the Samaritans did not know what they worshiped, and that "salvation is from the Jews." But a sense of the superiorities of the Jews over the Samaritans did not lead Jesus to despise these less fortunate members of God's great family.

In our own country we have the problems involved in the relationships which exist and which ought to exist between the white people of our country and the Negroes and between the white people and the Oriental races. What should be the attitude of white Christians toward people of the black race and toward people of the yellow race? The lesson which we have chosen from the life of Jesus ought to help us to solve the question.

#### SOME TRUTHS FROM THE LESSONS WE HAVE BEEN STUDYING

Andrew must have lost all race prejudice out of his life when he became a missionary to barbarian peoples.

Philip may have thought that Jesus would not care to talk with Greeks because they were of a foreign race, but Andrew understood his Teacher too well to have any such idea.

Great missionaries like John G. Paton have been free from all race prejudice. They have recognized that even cannibals are worth saving in the sight of God.

The woman who recognized that even a Negro convict lad was precious in the sight of God must have had a large measure of the mind of Christ.

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How did the brothers, Peter and Andrew differ from one another?
2. What facts show that they were companionable?
3. Show that Andrew was friendly and helpful to the other disciples.
4. How far can we trace Andrew in the New Testament narratives?
5. What traditions concerning him have come down to us?

## BIBLE VERSES

Gen. 1:26, 27; 3:20; Jer. 38:7-13; Mark 16:15; Luke 10:33, 34; 17:11-19; Acts 10:34; 15:6-11; 17:26; Col. 3:11.

## STUDY TOPICS

1. The Original Home of the Black Race. (A description of the conditions existing among African tribes.)
2. How the Negroes Came to America.
3. Progress Among Negroes Since the Emancipation Proclamation.
4. Work of the Board of Missions for Freedmen of the Presbyterian Church. (Write for information to their headquarters, Bessemer Building, Pittsburgh, Pa.)
5. Booker T. Washington and His Life Work. (See "Up from Slavery," by Booker T. Washington.)
6. Paul Lawrence Dunbar, the Negro Poet. (See any good Dictionary of Biography.)
7. Negro Songs Which Have Become Famous.
8. Conditions Among Colored People in Our Town (State or Nation).
9. Liberia, a Negro Republic. (Its location, history, et cetera. See encyclopedia.)
10. What the White Race Can Do to Help the Black Race and the Yellow Race in America.

## PUTTING THE TRUTHS OF THE LESSON INTO PRACTICE

Let the class try to find some helpful service which it can do for people of another race. Homes for colored children or for Chinese children may be visited if they are located near enough. Articles for use in such homes, or contributions toward their support, may be made by members of the class.

## CHAPTER VIII

### MATTHEW, A PUBLICAN WHO BECAME AN APOSTLE

#### WEEK DAY SESSION

#### A MAN WHO HAD SOLD HIMSELF FOR GAIN

Matt. 9:9-13; Luke 5:27-39

During the life of Jesus on earth the Romans were rulers of Palestine. As was their custom, the Romans imposed heavy taxes on the land of the Jews. They let out by contract the collecting of these taxes; that is, some man would pay the Romans a sum of money for the privilege of collecting taxes in a certain district. Then he collected enough to pay the Romans and as much more as he could extort from the people. The officers who collected the taxes were called publicans. They were hated and despised by the Jews both because they represented the Roman power which had taken away their liberty and because of their cruel extortion. Especially did the Jews despise one of their own nation if, for greed of gain, he became a collector of taxes.

**Jesus Calls a Publican to Be a Disciple.** Matt. 9:9-13. In Capernaum a certain Jew named Levi had become a taxgatherer. In all probability he had taken up this task because of the large profits which he foresaw could be gained in that way. He was willing to make himself rich out of the misfortunes of his fellow countrymen and the degradation of his nation. Perhaps Levi had said to himself: "In a time like this, every man must look out for his own interests. I must first of all save myself. I must live, even if I have to serve the Romans and force the people to pay more taxes than is just." And so Levi had become a publican. He sat at his desk and relentlessly compelled his fellow townsmen to pay. He became accustomed to the glances of hatred and disdain which were cast at him and the half-uttered curses of those he robbed of their hard-earned wages. He could

not go to the synagogue for they had excommunicated him, but he did not care. He was growing rich, and he could depend upon the Romans to protect him from personal violence. Levi was just like thousands of others in that day. Self-interest had come to be the ruling passion of his life.

But there came a year when a new spirit began to creep over the souls of men. Little groups of people on the street corners of Capernaum were gathered together to talk not of the usual topics of conversation but of a wonderful prophet who had appeared and who was preaching out in the wilderness and drawing vast multitudes to hear his message. The ringing challenge of this new prophet was summed up in the words, "Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." That challenge stirred the hearts of thousands. It touched even the souls of the publicans. Those taxgatherers came to John saying humbly, "What shall we do?" It may be that Levi was one of the publicans who responded to John's preaching.

It was not long after this that Jesus began to preach. He soon came to Capernaum. He preached there in the synagogue and out by the shore of the lake. He healed many and cast out demons. Levi, without doubt, heard Jesus, and became dissatisfied with his own way of life. One day Jesus was going out of Capernaum and he passed right by the office where Levi was sitting. We do not know whether Jesus had known Levi before and had learned of his longing for a better way of life, or whether he read the story of that longing in the face of the taxgatherer as he sat at his desk. At all events, Jesus said to him, "Follow me." Levi arose and followed Jesus, and from that moment he was a disciple. Levi is commonly called Matthew in the Gospel narratives. Jesus may have given him a new name as he did Peter.

**Matthew's Feast.** Luke 5:27-29. Soon after becoming a follower of Jesus, Matthew gave a great feast in his house. It was a farewell party to his friends and a celebration of his call to be a disciple. Many of those whom he invited were publicans. Of course, no Pharisee would have gone to such a feast. He would not think of even

entering the house of a publican. Jesus was invited and he went, for Jesus was entirely free from that prejudice against the taxgatherers which was so common among the Jews. He deplored the abuses of the tax system, but he knew that matters could never be made right by petty spite work and social ostracisms.

**The Scribes and Pharisees Find Fault.** Luke 5:30-39. Although the scribes and Pharisees would not go to Matthew's feast, they were not far away. They were watching all that was going on. At the first opportunity they came to the disciples of Jesus saying, "Why do ye eat and drink with the publicans and sinners?" Jesus answered for his disciples and his answer was: "They that are in health have no need of a physician; but they that are sick. I am not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance."

This answer of Jesus was so complete an exposure of the false standards of the Pharisees that they shifted their attack to other grounds. They said to Jesus, "The disciples of John fast often, and make supplications; likewise also the disciples of the Pharisees; but thine eat and drink." Jesus told them that he and his little party were so happy together that they were like a bridal company all the time. It was not a time for fasting just then. But he added the statement that the time was coming when the Bridegroom would be taken away and that then his disciples would fast.

**A Case of Conversion.** We have in the case of Matthew an illustration of genuine conversion. He gave up his profitable employment, left his home, and became a follower of Jesus. As a publican, he had cared more for money than he did for his fellow countrymen. As a disciple, his great ambition was to persuade his fellow countrymen that Jesus was the Messiah foretold by the prophets. From an apostate Israelite he was changed into a Christian, through his faith in Jesus and the influence of Jesus over his life.

**Workfellow with Thomas.** Matt. 10:1-15. In the list of the disciples which accompanies the account of the missionary journey on which Jesus sent the apostles, the name of Matthew is paired with that of Thomas.

Jesus may have put the two together because they were very unlike in some respects and therefore able to help one another. Thomas is considered to have been a man slow of belief, but his lack of faith seems to have been due to a natural tendency toward melancholia. He was in the habit of looking on the dark side. He was always expecting the worst to happen and found it hard to believe good news because it seemed too good to be true. On the other hand, Matthew was apparently a man of cheerful disposition and ready faith. We see these qualities in his prompt and cheerful response to the call of Jesus to become a disciple. We see it in his act of preparing a great feast for his friends and for Jesus.

#### THE INDIANS WHO SOUGHT THE WHITE MAN'S BOOK OF HEAVEN

Just west of the Bitter Root Mountains lies a vast table-land intersected by the deep canyons of several large rivers. This country is the ancestral home of the Nez Percé Indians. Through this region Lewis and Clark made their way down the Clearwater River to the Snake River and thence by way of the Columbia River to the Pacific Ocean. From these explorers and from wandering trappers the Nez Percés learned that the white men had a book which told about a future life. They called it "the white man's Book of Heaven" and it became the desire of the whole tribe to get possession of a copy of this book. They talked with the traders about it, but could get little information from them.

At last a council of the tribe was called and it was determined that they should send some of their people on a search for the book. Four men left their homes at Kamiah on the Clearwater River, ascended the western slopes of the Bitter Root Mountains, and crossing that range reached the headwaters of the Missouri River. Descending that river, after a two-thousand-mile journey they at last reached St. Louis. Here they were recognized by an old trapper who told the officers of the fort that these Indians were Nez Percés from the upper Columbia River regions. It happened that the com-

manding general at the fort was the Captain Clark who had been one of the leaders of the expedition which passed through the country of the Nez Percés on its way to the Pacific.

Captain Clark received the Indians kindly and entertained them for a number of weeks, but he could not help them in their quest. The Indians were saddened to know that there was no book of heaven in any language that they could understand. During their stay in St. Louis two of the Indians died. In the spring the two survivors prepared to begin their long homeward journey. A banquet was given the two Indians just before they started home. In answer to the farewell greetings of their white friends, one of the Indians arose and said: "I came to you over the trail of many moons. . . . You were the friends of my fathers, who have all gone the long way. I came with an eye partly open for my people who sit in darkness. I go back with both eyes closed. How can I go back blind to my blind people? I made my way to you with strong arms through many enemies and strange lands that I might carry back much to them. I go back with both arms broken and empty! Two fathers came with us; they were the braves of many snows and wars. We leave them asleep here by your great waters and tepees. They were tired by many moons, and their moccasins wore out.

"My people sent me to get the white man's Book of Heaven. . . . I am going back the long trail to my people in the dark land. You make my feet heavy with gifts, and my moccasins will grow old in carrying them, and yet the Book is not among them! When I tell my poor blind people, after one more snow, in the big council, that I did not bring the Book, no word will be spoken by our old men or by our young braves. One by one they will rise up and go out in silence. My people will die in darkness, and they will go on a long path to other hunting grounds. No white man will go with them, and no white man's Book to make the way plain. I have no more words."

**SUNDAY SESSION****THE LIFE OF JESUS WHICH MATTHEW WROTE**

Matt., ch. 25

We can trace Matthew through the New Testament accounts as far as we have traced Andrew in a previous lesson, but no further. Traditions concerning him are not so abundant as in the case of some of the other disciples. He is said to have preached to the Jews and from the nature of his writings this is not improbable. Matthew was a man of considerable education. His employment as a taxgatherer would indicate this, for in that occupation he would have to keep accounts accurately, make extensive reports, and do considerable work of a literary nature. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that he became one of the authors of the New Testament.

In the Gospel narratives, Matthew is not often mentioned. He was evidently not a disciple who took a leading part, like Peter or John. But in writing the account of the life of Jesus which has become a part of the New Testament, Matthew accomplished a task second to none in importance.

**For Whom the Book Was Written.** It is quite evident that Matthew wrote this brief account of the life and the teachings of Jesus primarily for his own countrymen. The Gospel of Matthew is especially marked by quotations from the Old Testament. This probably means that in his education Matthew had mastered much of the Old Testament literature. It is probably due, also, in a measure, to the aim which Matthew had in view as he wrote. His great objective was to persuade his fellow countrymen, the Jews, that Jesus is the Messiah. While Matthew had his fellow countrymen especially in mind, under God's providence he was writing for all mankind, because the greatest need of all humanity is just the same as the need of the Jewish people of whom Matthew was thinking. All must come to know Jesus and to accept him as the Son of God, the Messiah who is the Saviour of the world.

**Matthew's Account of the Sermon on the Mount.**



Matt., chs. 5 to 7. Our knowledge of the life and teachings of Jesus would be much less perfect than it is, if Matthew had not written his Gospel. Take the Sermon on the Mount as an illustration. Luke gives us fragments of this great address, and there are a few suggestions of it in other parts of the Gospels, but Matthew gives us an orderly summary of this great discourse. It may be that Matthew wrote down portions of Jesus' address at the time it was delivered, or soon after, and thus preserved for all the future generations these priceless spiritual truths which the sermon of Jesus expresses so perfectly.

**Matthew's Account of the Infancy of Jesus.** Matt., ch. 2. The whole of the second chapter of Matthew is information not contained elsewhere in the New Testament. If Matthew had not written his life of Jesus, we should have known nothing of the visit of the Wise Men, the flight into Egypt, the destruction of the infants of Bethlehem by Herod, and the circumstances under which Joseph and Mary became again residents at Nazareth.

**Parables of Jesus Mentioned Only by Matthew.** The twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew contains three parables which are beautiful, considered as gems of literature, and sublime in their spiritual teaching. They are the Parable of the Ten Virgins, the Parable of the Talents, and the Parable of the Last Judgment. There are eight other parables of Jesus which are found only in Matthew. These are as follows: The Parables of the Tares, the Hidden Treasure, the Pearl of Great Price, the Dragnet, the Unmerciful Servant, the Laborers in the Vineyard, the Father and Two Sons, and the Marriage of the King's Son.

**Miracles of Jesus Mentioned Only by Matthew.** Three of the miracles of Jesus recorded in the New Testament are found only in the Gospel of Matthew. They are the account of the healing of two blind men, Matt. 9:27-31; the casting out of a dumb spirit, Matt. 9:32, 33; and the finding of the shekel in the fish's mouth, Matt. 17:24-27.

**Matthew's Contribution to Our Knowledge of the Life and Teachings of Jesus.** The portions of Matthew's Gospel listed in the previous paragraphs give some conception of the large contribution which Mat-

thew has made to our knowledge of the life and teachings of Jesus. This will not give us a complete understanding of the matter, however. Many of the incidents of the life of Jesus are mentioned by several of the Gospel writers, yet the accounts are not exactly the same. For instance, all the Gospel narratives tell of the burial of Jesus, but Matthew alone tells of the coming of the Pharisees to Pilate to ask that a guard be set at the door of the sepulcher. Matthew alone tells us that the stone was sealed. He alone tells us of the bribing of the guard by the Pharisees, so that they reported that the disciples of Jesus came by night and stole away the body while they were asleep. Thus all the way through the Gospel of Matthew we might point out interesting items of information which he alone has given.

#### WHAT THE WHITE MAN'S BOOK OF HEAVEN HAS DONE FOR THE NEZ PERCÉ INDIANS

The story of the four Nez Percé Indians who journeyed to St. Louis on foot to find the white man's Book of Heaven led to the sending of the first missionaries to the far Northwest of our country. In answer to the call for volunteers who would undertake the task of bringing the white man's Book of Heaven to the Nez Percé and other Indian tribes, men like Marcus Whitman, Jason Lee, and Henry H. Spalding offered themselves. Marcus Whitman became a missionary to the Cayuse Indians in what is now the eastern part of the State of Washington. The story of how he took the first wagon across the Rocky Mountains and afterward saved the Oregon country for the United States, by making a trip from his mission station to Washington, D. C., in the dead of winter, is one of the heroic tales of missionary adventure in America. Jason Lee built a mission station in the Willamette Valley and organized there the first Protestant church on the Pacific coast. Henry H. Spalding was given the task of taking the white man's Book of Heaven to the Nez Percés. He built a mission at Lapwai where he gathered the children into a school and began his labors among the adult Indians.

When the Cayuse War broke out, both Mr. and Mrs. Whitman perished, and Mr. Spalding and his family had to flee from their station among the Nez Percés. But after the war, the work was resumed. A faithful young woman named Sue McBeth came to be Mr. Spalding's helper. Later her sister Kate joined the mission force. These two sisters became the spiritual guides to the whole Nez Percé tribe. They found that the language was surprisingly extensive, but they labored diligently to master its vocabulary and its grammar. Their ambition was to give to the Nez Percés that which they had so long desired, namely, the Bible in their own language. At last the task was complete, or so nearly complete that the manuscript was to be sent east for publication. The manuscript of the McBeth sisters was placed on a little river steamboat and started down the Snake River. To their great grief the sisters heard in a few days that the little boat had met with disaster. Its boiler had exploded and it had sunk in the river, the passengers barely escaping with their lives and the cargo going to the bottom of the river with the disabled craft. The manuscript which they had sent on the boat was the only complete copy they had. Years of labor were evidently gone for nothing. Could they begin all over again and produce once more the translation of the Bible into the Nez Percé tongue? They feared that life would not be long enough for again completing the task.

That night they were overjoyed when a rough man of the frontier came to the mission and handed them the precious manuscript. It was somewhat damp and discolored by water stains, but perfectly legible. The man said he had fished it out of the Snake River some miles below where the steamboat sank.<sup>1</sup>

The Bible was then published in the language of the Nez Percé Indians. At last they had the long-desired white man's Book of Heaven. And it has proved a wonderful blessing to the tribe. Their reservation is now dotted over with schoolhouses and churches. They have many native preachers who not only instruct the people of the tribe, but also, every year, bear the gospel mes-

<sup>1</sup> From "Winning the Oregon Country," by John T. Faris, D.D.

sage to other tribes of the Northwest. Every year they have a wonderful camp meeting where practically all the Nez Percé people gather for worship and Bible study. They have found in the white man's Book of Heaven the way of purity, service, and joy.

### THE LESSON PRAYER

Teach us, our Father in heaven, rightly to value the Book which thou hast given us to guide us to thee. Help us to follow its teachings. Make us willing and anxious to send it to all the peoples of the earth. Bless the work of the Christian churches among the American Indians. We pray that they may all be won for the religion which Jesus taught and lived. We ask in the name of thy Son. Amen.

### THE LESSON HYMN

"My Country, 'Tis of Thee." "Studies of Familiar Hymns," page 97.

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## EXPRESSIONAL SESSION

### MISSION WORK AMONG THE AMERICAN INDIANS

Eph. 2:11-22

In writing to people who had not very long before been converted from paganism to Christianity—Paul reminds them that they had been far off but are now "made nigh in the blood of Christ." It is a good thing for the American people to remember the same thing in their dealings with the American Indians. It is not so very long ago that our ancestors were just as much pagans and barbarians as the wildest and rudest of the American Indians. They changed from that condition because heroic missionaries risked their lives to go among them and teach them the Christian religion. In passing the gospel message on to the backward races of the world, we are only repeating the "good turn" which was done to our ancestors.

SOME TRUTHS FROM THE LESSONS WE HAVE BEEN  
STUDYING

Selfishness made Matthew a publican and a hindrance to God's Kingdom. From Jesus, Matthew learned the lesson of unselfish service and thus became missionary to his fellow countrymen.

Jesus would not allow false social standards to hinder his helpfulness. He came to minister to all who were in need of the great Physician.

The company of Jesus' disciples was strengthened because Jesus chose as his disciples men of widely different characteristics. The same rule applies to nations. The American Indians, if they are absorbed into the citizenship of our nation, will add something to our national character which will be of much value.

The Nez Percé Indians were right in thinking that the white man's Book of Heaven was worth a long and dangerous journey. No other book in the world could have done for them what the Bible has done.

Other Indian tribes besides the Nez Percés have been transformed by the introduction of the Bible among them. The following is an extract from the report of Dr. Marquis, General Secretary of the Board of Home Missions of the Presbyterian Church, for the year 1921:

"On December twenty-third, at Sacaton, Arizona, there was celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the first coming of Dr. Charles H. Cook as a pioneer missionary to the Pima Indians. In fifty years this tribe has been lifted from a state of primitive paganism to a fine, well-developed, Christian community life. There are now in this reservation twelve organized Presbyterian churches, with over two thousand members."

The courage of the Nez Percé Indians in undertaking the journey to St. Louis is characteristic of the Indian. Nine thousand Indian youths were soldiers in the World War. Six thousand of that number were volunteers.

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Give two reasons why the publicans were hated by the Jews.

2. Give some reasons why Jesus called Matthew to be a disciple.
3. Why was Jesus' way of dealing with publicans better than the way of the Pharisees?
4. What changes are seen in Matthew's life after he became a disciple?
5. Tell the story of the Indians' journey to find the Bible.
6. Give some evidences that Matthew wrote his Gospel especially for Jews.
7. Name some events in the life of Jesus mentioned by Matthew only.
8. What parables are mentioned only by Matthew?
9. What miracles of Jesus are described by Matthew only?
10. How was the Bible finally made available for the Nez Percés?

#### BIBLE VERSES

Josh. 1:8; II Kings 22:8-13; Neh. 8:8; Ps. 72:11, 12; Isa. 11:9; Acts 1:8; Rom. 1:16.

#### STUDY TOPICS

1. The Work the Presbyterian Church is Doing for the Indians. (Write for information to Board of Home Missions, 156 Fifth Ave., New York City.)
2. Is the Indian Race Destined to Extinction? (See Government reports for years 1870, 1880, 1890, and 1900.)
3. Why We Are Under Obligation to Christianize the Indians.
4. Admirable Traits of Indian Character.
5. John Eliot, an Early Missionary to the Indians. (See Dictionary of Biography.)
6. The Religious Beliefs of the Indians Before the Coming of the White Race to America.
7. What Christianity Can Do for the Indians. (Illustrate by the story of the Nez Percés, Pimas, and other tribes.)
8. Has Our Nation Treated the Indians Justly?

9. The Story of Ramona. (A brief review of Helen Hunt Jackson's book.)

10. What Can Our Class Do to Help Christianize the Indians?

PUTTING THE TRUTHS OF LESSON INTO PRACTICE

Some weeks before this lesson is taken up, let members of the class write letters to Indian schools and missions asking what an Intermediate class can do to help the work along. Let these letters be read in this meeting and practical plans discussed for the helping of such schools and missions.

## CHAPTER IX

### JAMES THE APOSTLE AND JAMES THE LORD'S BROTHER

#### WEEK DAY SESSION

#### THE FIRST OF THE APOSTLES TO DIE FOR THE FAITH

Luke 5:1-11; 9:51-56; Mark 5:35-43; 10:35-45; Acts 12:1, 2

Two of the twelve disciples were named James. One of them is called James, the son of Alphæus. Since Matthew is also called the son of Alphæus, this James may have been the brother of Matthew. This hardly seems probable; however, as the two are never mentioned together in the Gospels. The name Alphæus may have been rather common in those days. The other disciple who bore the name of James was the brother of John. There was also another James who was the brother of Jesus. In this chapter we are to learn what the New Testament teaches us about the life and character of James the disciple and James the Lord's brother. Our first lesson is concerned with James the disciple.

**"Sons of Thunder."** Mark 3:17. We have seen how brotherly and helpful Peter and Andrew were to one another. The same relationship of helpfulness existed between the sons of Zebedee. They are nearly always mentioned together and seem to have been much alike in disposition. In this respect they were unlike Peter and Andrew who, as we have seen, differed very much from each other.

In a number of instances Jesus gave his disciples new names as soon as they became his followers. He changed Simon's name to Peter. Perhaps he changed Levi's name to Matthew. Jesus seems to have done this because he recognized in the disciples to whom he gave new names certain desirable qualities, or the power to develop certain desirable qualities. The name Peter



means a stone. Jesus saw in Peter qualities as yet undeveloped which would in time make him stand like a rock for that which is righteous and true. Perhaps Peter's new name helped him to develop the latent possibilities for firmness in the right which Jesus saw in him.

Jesus called James and John Boanerges, which means "sons of thunder." If we read the Twenty-ninth Psalm and remember that it is a reverent description of a great thunderstorm sweeping across the mountains and plains of Palestine, we shall see that, to the pious Hebrew, thunder was the "voice of Jehovah," sounding forth in majesty. Is it not probable that Jesus gave these two disciples this name because of the fact that he saw in them the possibilities of sublime character? How fully John fulfills the name when it is considered in this way! His writings are so sublime that the Early Church chose as the symbol of John the eagle, a bird which soars sublimely into the very clouds of heaven. We may be sure that James possessed these same qualities of character, for he was in every way like his brother.

**Farewell to the Fishing Business.** Luke 5:1-11. Jesus did not choose his twelve apostles and ordain them at the very beginning of his ministry. There were certain steps through which these men rose to the position of apostleship. Some of them met Jesus at the place where John the Baptist was preaching and baptizing. They forthwith became disciples of Jesus, but the relation of discipleship was not then what it came to be later. They returned to their homes and to their occupation as fishermen. Later Jesus saw them and called them away to become his pupils in a more definite way.

There were a number of occasions, however, when Peter and Andrew, James and John returned to the task of catching fish. One day when Jesus was preaching by the Sea of Galilee there was such a multitude present that there was hardly standing room for Jesus and his disciples. So Jesus got into Peter's boat and put out a short distance from land. Sitting down in the boat, he taught the people. When he had finished speaking to the multitudes, Jesus asked Peter to put out into the

lake and let down the nets. When they tried to draw the nets in, they found them so full of fish that the disciples were amazed. Jesus wished to give these four disciples one final lesson before they left their familiar labor. He wished to teach them that in the new enterprise to which he had called them, their success would depend upon the fidelity with which they trusted and followed him as their Teacher and Leader. This wonderful draft of fishes ended the fishing business for the four disciples, except that they returned to it for a brief period after the death and resurrection of Jesus.

**Intimate Fellowship with Jesus.** Mark 5:35-43. Peter and James and John made up a kind of inner circle among the disciples. There were a number of times when Jesus chose these three to be with him. They were with him on the mountain when Jesus talked with Moses and Elijah and his appearance was changed in that remarkable way which has come to be called the transfiguration. They were near him in the Garden of Gethsemane. When Jesus went into the house of Jairus to raise to life the little twelve-year old girl, he suffered no persons to go with him save the father and mother of the child and the three disciples whom we have named. These facts show us that James was a young man of importance in the company of the disciples and that his relationships with Jesus were of the most intimate kind.

**Some Defects of the Character of James.** Mark 10:35-45; Luke 9:51-56. James had the same defects of character which we have seen in the life of his brother John. As a young man he was selfishly ambitious. He thought Jesus was about to set up a temporal kingdom and he wished to become one of the chief officials in that kingdom. He had to learn, just as the other disciples did, that true greatness of character is not dependent upon the holding of high official positions.

James also joined with his brother in the suggestion that fire be called down from heaven to consume the inhospitable Samaritans who had refused shelter to Jesus and his disciples. Intense loyalty to his Master aroused fierce indignation in the heart of James. Later, James learned other ways of expressing his devotion to Jesus,

ways that were unselfish, ways that did not contemplate the destruction of the lives of others, but the laying down of his own life as evidence of his loyalty to his Lord.

**The "Last Full Measure of Devotion."** Acts 12:1, 2. When the persecutions of the Christians began, an unprincipled man named Herod Agrippa was ruler of a large portion of Palestine. Herod Agrippa was a crafty politician. He had won the support of the Roman emperor by his cunning and his flatteries. He managed in the same way to keep the support of the more powerful of the leaders and parties among the Jewish people.

When the persecutions against the Christians began, Herod Agrippa saw an opportunity to gain favor for himself among the Jewish leaders. It involved nothing but the taking of the lives of a few Jewish peasants, so Herod Agrippa took a hand in the persecutions. That he selected James as his first victim is proof that James was a leader and one of the most active of the disciples in preaching Jesus and the resurrection.

Herod had James killed with a sword. He noted carefully the effect of this act on the Jewish leaders. When he saw that it pleased them, he seized Peter as another of the prominent leaders of the Christians and lodged him in jail, intending to have Peter put to death, too. He intended that this execution should take place just after the passover feast, but Peter was miraculously delivered and before Herod Agrippa could again lay hands on his intended victim, he himself was no longer among the living. He was smitten with a terrible malady and he "gave up the ghost."

#### A GRAIN OF WHEAT WHICH DYING BROUGHT FORTH AN ABUNDANT HARVEST

We may wonder why God in his providence allowed so young and promising a leader as James to be removed from the life work which he was beginning. We do not have the information at hand for a full answer to the problem. We see only the present life with its problems and tasks and know little of the opportunities in the life beyond where we are told that "his servants shall

serve him," just as they do here. Then, too, it may be that James accomplished more for the Kingdom of God by giving his young life for it than he could have accomplished by living and laboring on to extreme old age.

Tom Hannay, when he was a young lad, came from Scotland to live in America. He was fond of all outdoor sports and became a champion tennis player. Like his gay young companions, he lived for the pleasures of the moment until one night in a great tabernacle revival he heard a sermon that seemed to lay hold on his very soul. The evangelist was telling of the joys of a life given over to unselfish service. He told a story of a poor old Negro woman who had little learning but great love for Christ, and who brought many of her acquaintances to know him. When the call for decisions came, Tom Hannay had made up his mind. He declared his intention henceforth to follow Jesus as his teacher.

It was not long before Tom was in Christian Endeavor work. He traveled much, attending meetings and conventions, especially on the Pacific coast. He was a favorite with the young people wherever he went, and thousands to this day carry the helpful memory of his hearty handshake and his cheerful words of counsel.

Tom Hannay decided to become a foreign missionary. He chose Africa as his field of labor because it was the story of an old Negro woman that first led him to think of devoting his life to the service of Christ.

He was in his field of labor only a few weeks when the dreaded African fever struck him and he laid down the work he had just begun. When word reached America that Tom Hannay was dead in Africa, there was widespread grief among all who had known him. Some thoughtless people wondered at what they regarded as a mysterious providence of God. They thought that Tom had made a great blunder when he left the Young People's work to go to Africa. Perhaps, however, Tom Hannay made his greatest contribution to the cause of God's Kingdom when he faced the dangers of a fever-stricken district of Africa and heroically met his death that he might serve his King. Within a year more than

a score of young people who had known Tom had signed their names to pledges expressing their conviction that they were called of God to become missionaries. They wished to help in the task which their friend had begun but which he had not been privileged to carry very far. Jesus had this truth in mind when as a young man of thirty-four he faced the cross and said, "Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth by itself alone; but if it die, it beareth much fruit."

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## SUNDAY SESSION

### JAMES, A BROTHER OF JESUS WHO BECAME A LEADER OF THE EARLY CHURCH

Mark 3:20-22; 6:1-6; John 7:1-9; Acts 15:1-29

After the birth of Jesus several other children came into the home of Mary and Joseph. Four of these were boys and their names were, James, Joseph, Simon, and Jude. There were at least two daughters in the family, so the total number of children was at least seven, which with Joseph and Mary made a family of nine. James was probably next to Jesus in age. In this lesson we are to learn what we can of this brother of Jesus who bore the name of James.

**The Family of Jesus Refuse to Accept Him as the Christ.** John 7:1-9. It is a remarkable fact that some of the greatest men of history have not been appreciated at anything like their true worth by members of their own families. It was so with Jesus. It is with a note of sadness that John records the fact, "For even his brethren did not believe on him." The first sight we get of James is, therefore, the sight of him as a disbeliever in Jesus. This disbelief of the relatives of Jesus was due in part to the fact that it is hard for us to appreciate greatness of character when it exists in those with whom we are perfectly well acquainted. It was more largely due, however, to the fact that Jesus did not do the things which they, in common with other Jews, expected the Messiah to do. There is a note of impatience in the admonition of the brothers of Jesus: "De-

part hence, and go into Judæa, that thy disciples also may behold thy works which thou doest. For no man doeth anything in secret, and himself seeketh to be known openly." These brothers had no doubt as to the wonderful power of Jesus. But they wished him to use his power in such a way as to demonstrate to the world that he was the Messiah.

**The Family of Jesus Seek to Place Him Under Restraint.** Mark 3:20-22. As time went on the relatives of Jesus concluded that his mind was unbalanced. They said, "He is beside himself." They came to take him home that they might keep him quiet and safe by force. This, too, has been a common experience among the greatest thinkers of the world. People called Professor Morse, the inventor of the telegraph, "Old Crazy Morse" during all the years when he was working out his great invention. It is said that when Columbus walked down the streets of almost any city where he had become known, in the days when he was planning his voyage to the Indies, even little children pointed to their foreheads and smiled. So we need not be greatly surprised that the family of Jesus and some other people thought that his mind was unbalanced. James, as the next to the eldest son in the family, was without doubt one of those who had most to do with the things we have been discussing.

**The Family of Jesus Become Christian Believers.** Acts 1:14; I Cor. 15:7. We do not know just when the family of Jesus came to believe in Jesus as God's Messiah and the Saviour of the world. We find that after the ascension of Jesus, Mary and the brothers of Jesus are named as a part of the company gathered in the upper room at Jerusalem. It may have been the heroic courage with which Jesus met the cross that finally convinced them. It may have been the resurrection of Jesus that brought these relatives to a saving faith. Paul tells us that one of the appearances of the risen Christ was to James. It is good to think that Jesus came to this brother of his who had so long battled with doubts and talked with him and helped him across to the firm ground of an undying faith in the world's Redeemer.

**James Rises to Eminence in the Church of Jerusalem.** Acts 15:1-29. Many years have passed since the beginnings of the Christian Church. It has withstood fiery persecutions and has grown continually. But now a more serious menace than any persecution has arisen. The Church is in danger of being torn asunder by internal strife. Leaders of the Church have assembled at Jerusalem to consider the questions involved in the controversy and to seek means whereby the unity of the Church may be maintained.

Peter is there. He is no longer the stalwart and somewhat uncouth fisherman. He has grown old in the service of his King, but in growing old Peter has become more like Christ. He pleads for a policy of broad and liberal brotherhood toward the Gentile Christians. Paul and Barnabas and Silas are there. They are vigorous young missionaries belonging to a generation coming next after that to which Peter belongs. But who is that venerable man who sits as president of the council and who guides its deliberations through to a successful issue, so that the Church is saved from the threatened disruption and true believers bound once more into a fellowship like that which marked the days succeeding Pentecost? It is James, the Lord's brother. He is the leading man of the Jerusalem church and that means the leading man in all the Church. He has made his way to leadership through his sterling qualities of character and is deeply respected even outside of the circle of Christian believers.

**A Letter Which James Wrote to the Christians of His Day.** By the beginning of the Christian era, the Jews had been scattered over most of the known world. These Jews living outside of Palestine were called the Dispersion. Many of these Jews of the Dispersion heard of Jesus through the preaching of Paul, Silas, and other Christian missionaries, and became followers of Christ. The wide interest of James and his influence over a large part of the civilized world are shown by the fact that he wrote a letter to these Christian Jews of the Dispersion. If the sympathies of James had not gone out far beyond his own city and his own country, he

would not have taken the trouble to write to these far-away Christians. If he had not been known and respected widely his letter would not have been very effective.

### A BOY WHO GAVE HIS PENNIES FOR MISSIONS

A good many years ago there lived near the village of Waterford, Maine, a lad named Cyrus Hamlin. Cyrus attended the Sunday school in the little church in Waterford. In the Sunday school was a woman who took great interest in foreign missions and who believed in teaching children to take an interest in sending the gospel to all the world. This woman's name was Mrs. Farrar and she kept a small box into which she asked the children to drop their offerings at Sunday school or when they happened to come to her home.

One day there was what was called in those days a "muster"; that is, all the men and the boys who were old enough gathered for military training. They marched, had sham battles, and music by fife and drum. It was a great day for the boys of the village. On the morning of the "muster," Cyrus started early for the scene of the day's maneuvers. As he left the house his mother gave him seven cents with which to buy something for his noonday lunch, at the same time suggesting that he save a penny or two for Mrs. Farrar's mite box. Cyrus was going by Mrs. Farrar's home and he thought he might as well put in what he could at once. But when he selected one cent, he remembered that his mother had said one or two, so he thought he would put in two pennies and keep five for his lunch. But his conscience began to bother him. He seemed to hear a voice saying: "Five for yourself and two for the heathen! Five for gingerbread and two for souls!" So he changed his mind and said that he would put three cents in the mite box. But there was still more for himself than for the missionaries. He changed his mind again and said that he would give four cents to the missionaries and keep three for himself; but he was ashamed to have the boys know that he had only three cents to spend and so when he reached Mrs. Farrar's he put all



his coins in the mite box, went on to the muster, and got along without anything to eat all day.

That night he came home saying: "Mother, I'm as hungry as a bear! I haven't had anything to eat to-day." His mother asked him what he had done with the money she gave him and he answered: "Mother, you didn't give it to me right. If you had given me eight cents or six cents, I would have divided it half and half. But you gave me seven. I couldn't divide it, and so I dropped it all in together."

You will not be surprised to learn that Cyrus became a missionary when he was grown to be a man. He was the first president of Robert College in Constantinople.

### THE LESSON PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, we thank thee for the practical lessons in Christian living which are contained in the Bible. We know that these lessons are to be found not only in the words and the writings of those who were thy servants in Bible times, but likewise in all that they did and all that they were. Give us understanding hearts so that we may know the truth. Make our wills obedient so that we may do that which pleases thee. We ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

### THE LESSON HYMN

"Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus." "Studies of Familiar Hymns," page 13.

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## EXPRESSIONAL SESSION

### SOME LESSONS FROM THE EPISTLE OF JAMES

#### James 1:19-27

The Epistle of James is full of advice concerning practical Christian living. We feel as we read the words of James that he is speaking out of his own experience and not as a mere theorist. Take the first admonition of the section which has been chosen as our Scripture lesson: "But let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak,

slow to wrath." James was chosen to be chairman at the council of Jerusalem because he possessed the qualities which he recommends in this verse. He was a good listener, "swift to hear." He heard patiently the opinions of those who represented both sides of the controversy which was threatening to disrupt the Church. A leader of great causes must always be "swift to hear." He was also "slow to speak." He spoke only after he had heard all the others and had pondered the matter in his mind. James was "slow to wrath." He knew how to control his temper. As leader of the church at Jerusalem he had many perplexing problems to solve. He had to deal with some people who at times were very provoking, but James had learned that there was nothing to be gained and much to lose by losing his temper. He had learned that "the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God."

James knew that in purity there is strength, hence he urged the Christians of his day to put away "all filthiness and overflowing of wickedness." James could not endure a religion which did not make itself manifest in conduct. He urges the Christians to be "doers of the word, and not hearers only." "Pure religion," he says, "is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world."

#### SOME TRUTHS FROM THE LESSONS WE HAVE BEEN STUDYING

Both James the disciple and James the Lord's brother learned from Jesus the lessons which made them great in character. Both had serious faults to overcome.

The family of Jesus misunderstood him because his ways of thinking and acting were so much higher and purer than theirs.

James the Lord's brother became a great man because he had ability, but chiefly because he had learned lessons from Jesus which made him wise, pure, and strong.

James the disciple was not at first "slow to wrath," but he learned self-control from his great Teacher.

James the Lord's brother had been for a time a doubter and he may have spoken out of experience when he

wrote, "He that doubteth is like the surge of the sea driven by the wind and tossed."

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Name the groups of brothers among the disciples.
2. Why did Jesus give some of his disciples new names?
3. Name the occasions when Peter, James, and John were alone with Jesus.
4. Show that James the disciple had certain defects of character.
5. Why did Herod Agrippa have James the disciple put to death?
6. What do we know about the size of the family in which Jesus grew up?
7. Why did Jesus' relatives find it hard to accept him as the Messiah?
8. How were Jesus' relatives brought to a faith in Jesus?
9. Name some facts concerning the Council of Jerusalem.
10. Tell what you can of the life and character of James the Lord's brother.

### BIBLE VERSES

James 1:1 (shows that James regarded Jesus as God's Son and the Messiah); ch. 1:5 (source of James's wisdom); ch. 1:17 (what James thought about God); ch. 2:14 (faith which is not genuine); ch. 4:1 (the source of wars).

### STUDY TOPICS

1. Lessons in This Epistle Which James Had Learned from Jesus. (Compare James 1:22 with Matt. 7:21 and James 5:12 with Matt. 5:33-37.)
2. The Democracy of James. James 2:1-4.
3. Two Kinds of Wisdom. James 3:3-18.
4. The Power of the Tongue for Good and for Evil. James 3:1-12.
5. The Selfish Use of Unearned Wealth. James 5:1-6.

6. Self-Confidence Which Leaves God Out of Account. James 4:13-17.

7. The Voice of Jehovah in the Storm. (A study of the Twenty-ninth Psalm by the pastor or some adult person.)

8. Why the Name Boanerges Was Suitable for James and John.

9. A Truth from the Epistle of James Which Ought to Help Us in Our Homes.

10. A Truth from the Epistle of James Which Ought to Help Us in Our School Life.

#### PUTTING THE TRUTHS OF THE LESSON INTO PRACTICE

Make a list of the admonitions of James in this epistle; such as "Be swift to hear; be slow to speak; be slow to wrath; do not have respect of persons for the sake of advantage; speak not one against another;" et cetera. Have written but unsigned reports as to experiences in carrying out such admonitions.

## CHAPTER X

### DISCIPLES OF WHOM BUT LITTLE IS KNOWN

#### WEEK DAY SESSION

#### PHILIP AND THOMAS, DISCIPLES SLOW OF BELIEF

John 1:43-51; 6:5-7; 12:20-22; 14:1-12; 20:24-29

We have seen how hard it was for even the mother and brothers of Jesus to believe in him. The difficulty lay in the fact that Jesus did not do the things which they expected the Messiah to do. Considering this fact, it is not strange that the disciples of Jesus all passed through periods of struggle before they came to a clear and unshakable faith in their Leader as God's Son and the Saviour of the world. The wonderful thing is, not the few instances when the disciples expressed doubt, but the fact that all save one of the twelve men whom Jesus chose to be with him came to have a faith in Jesus as the Messiah that made them willing to give their lives for their Leader. Very naturally some of the disciples had more difficulty in this matter than other disciples did. Two of the disciples who seem to have been slow of belief are Philip and Thomas. In this lesson we are to learn how the doubts of these two followers of Jesus were dispelled enabling them to become strong and efficient workers for the Kingdom of Christ.

**A Fellow Townsman of Andrew and Peter.** John 1:44. Philip lived in Bethsaida, a town at the upper end of the Sea of Galilee. This was also the home of Andrew and Peter. Philip was probably well acquainted with them, and also with their partners in the fishing business, the sons of Zebedee. This may be why Philip is mentioned so many more times in the Gospel which John wrote than in the other Gospels. John remembered the events connected with his friend and townsman.

It was through his acquaintance with Peter and Andrew that Philip first met Jesus. Philip must have been a man of promise, for Jesus had hardly looked upon him when he called him to become a follower.

**Philip Brings a Friend to Jesus.** John 1:45-51. Immediately after Jesus called Philip to be a follower, Philip went out and found a friend named Nathanael, Philip was full of enthusiasm and said to his friend, "We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." Now Nazareth was a town which did not have a very good reputation among the Jews. It was not very large and was probably a new town since it is not mentioned in the Old Testament. So Nathanael's first response to the words of Philip was, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Philip's enthusiasm could not be cooled by his friend's question. He knew that if Nathanael could but see Jesus and talk with him, the question would be answered, so he shouted with unabated enthusiasm, "Come and see." Nathanael came and talked with Jesus, believed on him, and there and then became a disciple.

**Learning Faith in the School of Christ.** John 6:5-7. Philip may have been one of those individuals whose enthusiasm kindles quickly but is apt to be quenched with equal abruptness. We feel as we read of him in other parts of the Gospels that he did not quite live up to the good start he had made. Perhaps he found it hard to change his ideas as to what the Messiah was to be and do. Jesus knew each of his disciples intimately and he gave them, not only general instruction, but also individual help. Jesus soon found that Philip's great danger lay in his tendency to lose faith in a Messiah whom he could not understand. So Jesus watched for occasions when he could help this disciple over his difficulties.

One day there was a great multitude of people with Jesus and his disciples. They were far away from any village where food could be bought, nor did Jesus and his disciples have money enough to buy food for the people, had it been readily obtainable. Turning to Philip, Jesus said, "Whence are we to buy bread, that these may eat?" Philip replied, "Two hundred shillings' worth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one may take a little." Philip probably knew that this sum of money was far beyond the resources of Jesus and his disciples,

at least beyond that which was available, and his answer was the same as saying that it was impossible for Jesus and his followers to offer even a little bread to each person in the multitude. If Philip can be called a doubter, he was at least an honest doubter, and the act of Jesus in feeding the multitude must have helped him to conclude that Jesus must be the Messiah.

**Philip and the Greeks.** John 12:20-22. It was to Philip that the Greek visitors to Jerusalem came asking to see Jesus. We have seen how Philip was uncertain as to what he ought to do about this request and sought the advice of his friend, Andrew. He was apparently still blinded by his own ideas as to what the Messiah should be and do. He did not think that it would be quite fitting for Jesus to talk with foreigners, if he were really the expected King of Israel. Faith gives spiritual vision and Philip's faith was not yet very perfect, so he was confused in his thinking on the matter.

**"Show Us the Father, and It Sufficeth Us."** John 14:8-12. When Jesus was making his farewell talk to his disciples in the upper room at Jerusalem, Philip interrupted him with the remark, "Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us." Jesus had all the time been showing the disciples what God was like. He had shown them by his conduct and by his teaching. He was God's Son and God's Representative. There is pathetic sorrow in the words of Jesus to his disciple: "Have I been so long time with you, and dost thou not know me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; how sayest thou, Show us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me?"

**Thomas, a Man of Melancholy Disposition.** John 14:1-7. Thomas, like Philip, was slow of belief, but his difficulties were of another kind than those of Philip. He was a man of a melancholy turn of mind. He had a habit of looking on the dark side. When Jesus was going up to Jerusalem after the death of Lazarus, Thomas was sure that the worst would happen and that Jesus would be put to death. Thomas had heroic devotion, however. He said to the other disciples on the occasion mentioned, "Let us also go, that we may die with him."

Thomas, like Philip, interrupted Jesus' last talk with the disciples by asking a question. Jesus had said, "Whither I go, ye know the way." Thomas said, "Lord, we know not whither thou goest; how know we the way?" Jesus replied in the memorable words: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no one cometh unto the Father, but by me."

**Thomas Convinced of the Resurrection of Jesus.** John 20:24-29. Thomas was not with the other disciples when Jesus first appeared to them after his resurrection. He could not believe that Jesus was alive, even when the other disciples declared that they had seen him. "Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails," said Thomas, "and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe."

A week later, Jesus appeared again when Thomas was present and gave him the proofs which he had declared to be necessary. Thomas was so overwhelmed with emotion when he knew that Jesus was alive that he could only say, "My Lord and my God." Jesus said to him, "Because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

Both Philip and Thomas came to have a firm and un-failing faith in Jesus. After his resurrection, they became preachers of the gospel which Jesus had given them.

#### HOW PRAYERS OF FAITH BUILT A MISSION STATION IN THE HEART OF AFRICA

In 1875, Henry M. Stanley passed through Uganda, a country of Central Africa. He paused long enough to win the confidence of the native king, Mutesa. The king was especially interested in what Stanley told him about Christianity and the God whom Christians worshiped. As Stanley bade farewell to the king and his subjects, Mutesa said, in broken English, "Stamlee, say to the white people, that I am like a man sitting in darkness, or born blind, and that all I ask is that I may be taught how to see, and I shall continue a Christian while I live."

Mr. Stanley wrote to a London newspaper, telling of his meeting with the African king and urging that mis-



sionaries be sent to establish a mission station in Uganda. A copy of the paper containing Stanley's article reached the office of the Church Missionary Society in London. When the secretaries read this call out of the heart of the Dark Continent, they felt that God was laying upon them the task of sending the gospel to the country of Mutesa. But they had no funds for so large an undertaking; also no workers were ready to go had the funds to send them been available.

Locking the office doors, the secretaries prayed to God that a way might be opened whereby they could build a station in the country of the African king who was longing for the true religion. It was only three days afterward that a letter arrived containing \$25,000 for the establishing of a mission in Uganda. In a little while the fund had grown to \$120,000. Workers were likewise secured in a remarkably short time. Over in Germany a young Scotchman named Alexander Mackay was studying engineering. He read about the proposed mission in an Edinburgh newspaper and at once felt that God was calling him to go as a missionary to Uganda. He wrote offering himself as a missionary for the African field. In a little while eight volunteers set sail to build a mission in Mutesa's Kingdom of Uganda.

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## SUNDAY SESSION

### SIMON THE CANANÆAN AND OTHER LITTLE KNOWN DISCIPLES

Luke 6:12-19; John 1:45-51; 14:21-24

There are some of the disciples concerning whom only brief statements are found in the New Testament. It is worth our while, however, to search these meager records that we may find out all we can concerning the men whom Jesus chose to be with him as his special pupils and upon whom he laid the great task of making his life and messages known to the world. Four of these little-known disciples will be studied in this lesson. This will complete the list of the twelve disciples with the exception

of Judas Iscariot, whose tragic failure will be considered in a later lesson.

**Simon the Cananæan.** Matt. 10:4. We can infer a good deal as to the character of this disciple from the fact that he was, or had been, a member of a party called the Cananæans. This party was made up of fiercely fanatical Hebrews who were determined to throw off the Roman rule at any cost. They held secret meetings and went about with swords or daggers concealed under their clothing that they might be ready, at a moment's notice, to take up the revolt against Rome. At various times they made stubborn but unsuccessful attempts to overthrow the Roman power. Simon must have been intensely patriotic, since he was a member of this party. He was doubtless a daring young fellow who counted it a privilege to risk his life for his country. Jesus saw in him the possibilities for large service in setting up the Kingdom of God in the world. Of course Simon's ideas and his methods had to be profoundly changed before he could become a worker for the kind of Kingdom which Jesus had in mind.

It is an interesting fact that Simon was the work mate of Judas Iscariot on the preaching tour of the disciples. Jesus may have placed this intensely patriotic man in company with Judas for a purpose. It may be that Jesus hoped that the fiery zeal of Simon would stir the heart of Judas to enthusiasm and devotion.

**James the Son of Alphæus.** Matt. 10:3. Of the two disciples who bore the name of James, one was the brother of John and the son of Zebedee. The other is called "the son of Alphæus." Since Matthew's father was named Alphæus, this second James may have been a brother of Matthew. In several places in the Gospels a certain man called "James the Less," or "James the Little," is mentioned. This is probably the same person as James the son of Alphæus. He may have been given the name because he was small of stature. James the Less had a brother named Joses and his mother's name was Mary.

**Judas, the Son of James.** Luke 6:16. This disciple also bore the name Thaddæus, by which name he is listed

in the roll of the apostles by Matthew and Mark. Luke always calls him "Judas the son of James." John mentions Judas once, being careful to follow his name with the significant phrase "not Iscariot." When Jesus was speaking to his disciples in the upper room just before going out to Gethsemane, he said to them, "He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him." At this point Judas broke in with a question. He said, "Lord, what is come to pass that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?" This brief remark shows us that Judas, like the other disciples, had been longing for the time when Jesus would do some wonderful act which would demonstrate to the satisfaction of all that he was the Messiah. Judas could not yet comprehend the importance of that inner manifestation which Jesus makes to those individuals who believe on him and love him. He was still thinking of some spectacular manifestation which Jesus would make to the nation as a first step toward setting up his Kingdom. John 14:21-24.

**Nathanael, the Friend of Philip.** John 1:45-51. Like so many of the other disciples Nathanael had two names. He is sometimes called Bartholomew. Nathanael's home was in Cana of Galilee. Soon after Philip met Jesus and decided to become a disciple, he went out and found his friend Nathanael, telling him that they had discovered the long-expected Messiah. In answer to Philip's invitation, he went with Philip to meet Jesus. When Jesus saw Nathanael coming, he said, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!" Nathanael was surprised at the words of Jesus and said, "Whence knowest thou me?" Jesus answered, "Before Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee." Nathanael was so impressed by what he believed to be the supernatural power of Jesus that he answered, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art King of Israel." Jesus told Nathanael that he should shortly see far more wonderful things than that he had just witnessed. And so Nathanael came to be one of the disciples.

Nathanael is mentioned again by John in the account

of the miraculous draft of fishes caught under the direction of Jesus after his resurrection. John 21:2. Under the name of Bartholomew he is mentioned in the lists of the apostles. In these lists his name always stands next to that of his friend, Philip. These two were evidently companions when Jesus sent out his disciples two by two.

The four disciples mentioned in this lesson all came to a full faith in Jesus after his resurrection. All are mentioned as being in the company gathered in the upper room at Jerusalem after the ascension of Jesus. All gave the remainder of their lives to the service of the Church and the building up of God's Kingdom in the world. It may seem unfortunate that we know so little about the lives of these men who were chosen by Jesus to carry on the work he had begun, but when we consider the matter, we see that we are told the things which are most important. That they learned to believe fully in their great Leader, and were faithful to him as long as they lived, is after all the thing which we need most to know.

**The Twelve Apostles.** It may be useful for us to learn the complete list of the apostles so that whenever we come across the name of any one of them in the New Testament or elsewhere we can at once associate the name of the apostle with what we have learned during these lessons:

Simon, also called Peter.

Andrew, the brother of Simon.

James, the son of Zebedee.

John, the son of Zebedee.

Philip, friend of Nathanael.

Nathanael, also called Bartholomew.

Thomas, sometimes called Didymus.

Matthew, also called Levi.

James, the son of Alphæus, sometimes called James the Less.

Judas, the son of James, also called Thaddæus.

Simon the Cananæan.

Judas Iscariot.

## WASHINGTON AT VALLEY FORGE

Most of the truly great men and women of history have been praying people. Their habit of praying has been one of the chief causes of their greatness. Prayer brings a person into a near fellowship with God and it develops the soul into the likeness of God. We grow like those with whom we have fellowship.

The winter which the little American army spent at Valley Forge was one of the darkest periods of the Revolutionary War. The American cause seemed all but lost. Philadelphia, the capital of the colonies, had been taken, and the British troops had advanced to Germantown. The American army was miserably sheltered in rude log cabins or dilapidated tents. The soldiers were without suitable clothing and many had no shoes. They left their bloody footprints on the frozen ground whenever they attempted to move about.

It was a time of severe testing for George Washington. As the commander in chief of the American forces, he naturally bore a heavy burden of responsibility. Many were against him and charged that his incompetence was the cause of the American disasters. A group of officers in the American army had banded themselves together to secure his resignation. They tried in every way to wound his feelings so that he would resign, but Washington loved the cause and he was of the kind that never gives up.

One day the man whose house Washington was occupying for the winter was passing through a lonely wood some distance from the American camp. He heard a voice somewhere off among the thick growth of trees and underbrush. Cautiously approaching he saw Washington on his knees in prayer. Tears were running down his cheeks and he was talking with God about the desperate situation of the American cause. That night this man told his wife of the incident and added, "If there is anyone in all the world the Lord will hear, it is George Washington." We know that his prayers were heard and that our nation has grown great and strong because we have had many who, like Washington, sought help from God in every time of need.

## THE LESSON PRAYER

Make us truly grateful, our Father, for the privilege of prayer. Help us to appreciate its importance. As Jesus taught his disciples to pray, so may we learn from him the same lesson. Forgive us for the many times we have forgotten thee and been disobedient. We thank thee for our country and are grateful to thee for the many men and women of our land who have held positions of responsibility and have honored thee. Make our nation more and more Christian. Help our Congress and our President to show the spirit of Jesus in their dealings with other nations. We ask in the name of thy Son. Amen.

## THE LESSON HYMN

“My Faith Looks Up to Thee.” “Studies of Familiar Hymns,” page 75.

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**EXPRESSIONAL SESSION**

## LEARNING TO PRAY IN THE SCHOOL OF JESUS

Matt. 6:5-15; Acts 4:23-31

The subject of prayer had a large place in the instruction which Jesus gave to his disciples. From the very first he began to teach them about the need of prayer and the nature of prayer. In the Sermon on the Mount he told his followers that prayer should not be for display. They were not to pray to “be seen of men.” They were to enter into their closets, close the doors, and pray to their Father in secret. They were not to use vain repetitions, saying the same prayer over and over as though it had some magical charm; they were to talk in a plain and sensible way with God as though he were their Father. Jesus then gave his disciples that model prayer which has ever since been called “The Lord’s Prayer.” It is a simple but wonderfully comprehensive prayer. It begins, as all prayer should, with the spirit of adoring praise to God. It asks with sublime simplicity for the greatest thing in all the world and the most important:

the coming of God's Kingdom and the time when God's will shall be done on earth as it is done in heaven. It asks for daily bread, for the forgiveness of sins, and for victory in times of temptation. This prayer which the disciples learned from Jesus is a prayer for every age and every individual.

All through his ministry, Jesus continued to teach his disciples about prayer. One of his last admonitions to them, in the Garden of Gethsemane just before the coming of Judas to betray him, was "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation."

Jesus probably taught his disciples even more about prayer by his own habits of prayer than he did by his words of instruction on the subject. When they heard him pray, they wished to become able to pray in the same way.

The second passage of Scripture tells of a prayer meeting among the followers of Jesus after his ascension. The followers of Jesus had at that time learned really to pray and wonderful things were being accomplished by prayer.

#### SOME TRUTHS FROM THE LESSONS WE HAVE BEEN STUDYING

Perhaps it was hard for Thomas to believe in Jesus because he had not learned to pray in the right way. A life full of prayer can hardly be a life darkened by melancholy. The exclamation of Thomas, "My Lord and my God," was a real prayer. Perhaps from that hour his faith in Jesus led him into habits of true prayer.

The building of the Uganda mission in answer to prayer is not an isolated incident. Missionary history is full of just such answers to prayer.

Simon the Cananæan learned from Jesus that prayer is mightier than the sword.

Nathanael may have been praying under the fig tree. This seems probable in view of the words of Jesus which stated that Nathanael was "an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!" Men of whom such a statement can be made are always men who pray.

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Name an incident which shows that the faith of the disciples had a gradual growth.
2. Show how Jesus tried to help his disciples to a true faith in him. (His words to Philip at the feeding of the five thousand.)
3. Explain what Philip meant when he said, "Show us the Father, and it sufficeth us."
4. Give evidences that Thomas was a man of melancholy disposition.
5. Tell the story of the founding of the Uganda Mission.
6. Who were the Cananæans?
7. Name the twelve apostles.
8. Tell the story of Washington at Valley Forge.
9. Name one occasion when Jesus taught his disciples about prayer.
10. Show that the disciples of Jesus learned to pray like their Teacher.

## BIBLE VERSES

Rom. 10:13; 15:30; Phil. 4:6; Col. 4:2; Heb. 11:6; James 1:5, 6, 7; 4:8; 5:13; I Peter 3:7.

## STUDY TOPICS

1. Things for Which Jesus Urged his Disciples to Pray. Matt. 6:10; 9:38; 26:41.
2. Some Instructions Concerning How to Pray. Matt. 6:5-8.
3. People For Whom We Should Pray. Matt. 5:43-48.
4. Some of the Prayers of Jesus. I. A Prayer of Joy and Thanksgiving. Luke 10:17-24.
5. Some of the Prayers of Jesus. II. The Intercessory Prayer in the Upper Room. John, ch. 17.
6. Some of the Prayers of Jesus. III. Sentence Prayers in the Garden. Matt. 26:36-46.
7. Prayer in the Early Church. Acts 1:14, 24; 4:23-31; 12:5.



8. Occasions When Jesus Spent All Night in Prayer. Matt. 14:23; Luke 6:12; 9:28.

9. The Importance of Prayer in the Life of a Young Christian. (To be taken by the pastor or superintendent.)

10. Ungranted Petitions. Why God Cannot Give Us All We Ask. Cor. 12:7-10.

#### PUTTING THE TRUTHS OF THE LESSON INTO PRACTICE

Consider the organization of a Quiet Hour Band within the class. Write to the United Society of Christian Endeavor, Boston, Massachusetts, for literature on the subject. Open the Week Day and Sunday Sessions of the class with prayer, encouraging all to take part. Discuss the Prayer Calendar of the denomination and have it used in the prayer services of the pupils in the class and in their homes. Make a prayer list of persons and causes for which members of the class are to pray.

CHAPTER XI  
JUDAS, THE FAILURE OF THE TWELVE  
WEEK DAY SESSION  
OVERCOME OF EVIL  
John 6:60-71; 12:1-8

We have studied the New Testament accounts which tell us about eleven of the disciples of Jesus. We have noted that in spite of serious faults of character and many stumblings they all turned out well. They all reached the place where they lost sight of low and selfish ambitions in their zeal to bring their fellow men to know the Teacher who had done so much for them. But there was one of the Twelve who was not victorious in that conflict with evil which we must all wage. He was overcome with evil. He failed disastrously. If the life of Judas has nothing of inspiration, it has much of warning.

**The Early Hopes of Judas.** The fact that Jesus chose Judas as a disciple makes us certain that there were great possibilities in the man. He might have become as great and useful as the other disciples; that he did not was his own fault. Judas, of course, came into the company of the disciples expecting Jesus to overthrow the Roman rule and set up a Hebrew kingdom. This is nothing against him, for all the other disciples, and the whole Jewish people for that matter, expected that the Messiah would do this very thing. Judas was partly patriotic in his desires, partly selfish. He longed to have his nation free and he had dreams of himself as an official of prominence in the great kingdom which the Messiah should establish.

**Unresponsive to the Character and the Ideals of Jesus.** Wherein, then, did Judas differ from the other eleven disciples? Why did he alone of the Twelve gradually slide down to spiritual disaster while they struggled upward to heights of sublime and Christlike char-

acter? The difference between Judas and the other disciples evidently lay in this: Judas was unresponsive to the personality and the ideals of Jesus, whereas the others gradually came to appreciate the grandeur and purity of the character of Jesus and to have an increasing conception of the value of the Kingdom he was trying to establish.

**A Treasurer Who Betrayed His Trust.** It is well for us to remember that Judas betrayed his trust long before he betrayed Jesus into the hands of the chief priests. His fall was not a sudden collapse of character, but a gradual yielding to evil. Jesus and the others had shown their confidence in Judas by making him treasurer of the little company. To betray that confidence was certainly a most unworthy act. Perhaps Judas began, as most embezzlers do, by some very slight irregularities in his accounts. Perhaps he excused himself for using for his own benefit just a little of the money intrusted to him by saying to himself that he had lost a great deal by becoming a disciple of Jesus and that it was only right that he should have something in return. Gradually, as he saw Jesus making no move toward setting up a kingdom of the kind he expected, he came to consider himself a much abused man. To steal from the scanty store of the little company became a fixed habit with him. Unconfessed sin is a great hindrance to spiritual progress. So it happened that while the other disciples were struggling upward, Judas was sliding downward. He could not appreciate the character of Jesus while he was living the life of an embezzler.

**The Turning Point in the Life of Judas.** John 6:60-71. If Judas had repented of his evil deeds and confessed his thefts, all might have been well with him. His deeds were bad, but scarcely worse than the act of Peter in denying his Lord with oaths. But Judas kept his sins secret, imagining that no one knew about them. In this he was mistaken, for John tells us that Jesus knew of the treachery of Judas, "from the beginning," which means that, at least from a time early in his ministry, Jesus knew what was going on in the heart of Judas.

There came a time when the evil in the heart of Judas

began to get full mastery. That time came just after the multitudes had conspired to take Jesus and make him king by force. Jesus sent his disciples away in a boat, then met the multitudes alone and sent them to their homes. This was a turning point in the career of Jesus. The multitudes, since Jesus would not be the kind of king they wished him to be, began to fall away. This caused concern among the disciples. They could not yet understand why their Master should refuse what seemed to them to be a favorable opportunity for making himself king. They were not pleased with what Jesus said to the multitudes. They "murmured" at the "hard saying" which Jesus had uttered.

That Judas was a leader in this murmuring is shown by the words of Jesus to his disciples when he said: "Doth this cause you to stumble? What then if ye should behold the Son of man ascending where he was before? It is the spirit that giveth life; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I have spoken unto you are spirit, and are life. But there are some of you that believe not."

There came a time when Jesus put the question directly to his twelve disciples. Many who had been followers of Jesus were forsaking him. Jesus said to the twelve, "Would ye also go away?" To his everlasting honor Peter replied, "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we have believed and know that thou art the Holy One of God." Peter spoke for all the disciples save one. To eleven of the Twelve, the words of Jesus were words of eternal life. But there was one of the Twelve who did not share in this noble estimate of the person and teachings of Jesus. Judas said nothing, so far as we are told, but Jesus knew what was in the heart of his disciple. Perhaps he could read it perfectly in his face. Jesus said to his disciples, "Did not I choose you the twelve, and one of you is a devil?"

From that time Judas, while he remained among the disciples, was not really one of them. He was there because he wished to get as much for himself as he could out of what he regarded as the shipwreck of the

undertaking in which they had been engaged. He could still act as treasurer and in part reimburse himself for the losses which he had suffered. Perhaps the thoughts of Judas went no further than this for the time being, but evil is ever pushing its victims nearer and nearer to the precipice and the soul of Judas was in deadly peril.

**Nearing the Abyss.** John 12:1-8. A week before the passover Jesus came to Bethany where his friends Mary, Martha, and Lazarus lived. These friends made a supper for Jesus and his disciples in honor of the event. While Jesus and his disciples were reclining at the table, Mary came with an alabaster box of precious perfume and, breaking it, poured its contents on the feet of Jesus.

Judas Iscariot was angry at Mary for, as he considered it, wasting the perfume. He said, "Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred shillings, and given to the poor?" Other disciples joined in the fault-finding and poor Mary stood confused and troubled before the group of men. Jesus, however, took her part and rebuked his disciples for their censures. He told them that they had the poor always with them and that they could do them good at any time but that he would not always be with them. He said that Mary had wrought a good work upon him and that she had anointed his body for its burial. Matt. 26:11, 12.

This mild and well-deserved reproof awoke bitter resentment in the heart of Judas. He had tried to stifle conscience by pitying himself and by brooding over imagined wrongs. He was in a highly irritable state. He thought of a plan whereby he might get gain for himself and vengeance for this imagined offense. Leaving the humble home in Bethany, he directed his steps toward the palace of the high priest.

### "A ROOT OF ALL KINDS OF EVIL"

Love of money was, at least in part, the cause of the downfall of Judas. "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." Jesus had uttered

these words in the Sermon on the Mount. Judas must have heard them, for he was a disciple at the time and the disciples were present. But Judas proved to be one of those who heard the words of Jesus and did them not; he built his house on the sand. He tried to serve God and mammon at the same time and ended by holding to mammon and rejecting God.

Devotion to money and the material values which money represents is one of the pitfalls of life. How such a devotion belittles the soul was understood even by the North American Indians as you will see from the story which they tell of the woodpecker and why he pecks on wood.

An Indian hunter was once lost in the forest. He wandered on for days but could find nothing to eat. At last he saw a tepee through the trees and, hastening to it, found an Indian woman making cakes with Indian corn. He asked for one of the cakes, but the woman refused. Then he asked if he might not have meal with which to make himself a little bread. The woman put both hands into the vessel of meal, but when she saw the golden grains she said, "I will not give so much," so she kept only one handful, letting the rest fall back into the vessel. Then she said, "Even this is more than I can spare." So she put back half of what she held in her one hand. She kept putting the meal back into the vessel, little by little. At last she said to the starving Indian, "I will give you none at all," and she threw the few remaining grains back into the vessel.

Now all this time a wonderful change was taking place in the woman's appearance. When she first divided her double handful, putting half of the meal back, she shrank to one half of her former size. And so she continued to grow smaller with every return of meal to the vessel. At last she became very small, indeed, and when she put the last of the meal back in the vessel, she changed into a small bird. She flew up into a tree where she has ever since done nothing but search for meal by pecking on dead limbs, but she finds nothing but a dust of dry wood. This, say the Indians, is the reason the woodpecker pecks on wood.

## SUNDAY SESSION

## A REPENTANCE NOT UNTO LIFE

Matt. 26:14-16, 47-50; 27:3-10; John 13:21-30

Sin is a treacherous enemy. It blinds the eyes so completely that the distinction between right and wrong is completely obliterated for the time being. Then it suddenly dissolves its mists, revealing the truth, and leaves the soul of its victim to a blank despair. Jesus said, "Every one that committeth sin is the bondservant of sin," and no slave ever had a more cruel master. We shall have evidence of the deceitfulness of sin as we continue the story of Judas.

**The Bargain with the Priests.** Matt. 26:14-16. Smarting under the reproof of Jesus, Judas went directly to the palace of the high priest. He knew that the leaders were very anxious to seize Jesus, if it could be done at a time when the multitudes would not be aroused. The priests knew that the majority of the people were friendly to Jesus and were likely to interfere if an attempt were made to put Jesus to death. They dreaded anything in the nature of a riot among the people, for that meant interference by the Roman soldiers. That Judas saw in the situation what he thought might be an opportunity to get considerable gain for himself is shown by his shameful question to the Jewish leaders: "What are ye willing to give me, and I will deliver him unto you?" That question made the priests and Pharisees glad. They were glad to think that at least one of the disciples of Jesus had turned traitor, glad to think that an opportunity was at hand for them to seize Jesus at a favorable time. They were so eager to bind the bargain that they forthwith weighed out thirty pieces of silver to Judas.

Judas went back and joined the company of the apostles. The success of his plan depended upon his gaining sufficient knowledge of the future movements of Jesus to enable him to seize a favorable opportunity to betray him into the hands of the priests. So he listened and watched. He heard about the plans for the

passover meal in the upper room. He knew that, especially in times of danger and stress, Jesus often spent a part or the whole of the night in prayer. He knew of a quiet garden on the slopes of the Mount of Olives and remembered that Jesus often went there to pray. We cannot excuse the crime of Judas on the grounds that it was due to a sudden impulse. For a week he watched and plotted. Probably he was in secret communication with the priests for he was now their paid representative.

**“And It Was Night.”** John 13:21-30. Judas came to the upper room meeting. It may be that he had not yet determined exactly where Jesus would be after the meeting and wished to find out. As they sat at supper, Jesus told the disciples that one of their own number was about to betray him into the hands of the priests and Pharisees. One by one the disciples began to say to him, “Is it I, Lord?” Judas, too, asked the question and Jesus told him that he was the one. Perhaps the other disciples did not hear what Jesus said to Judas, for they continued to make inquiry as to who it was that would betray their Teacher.

Peter was especially persistent in his efforts to find out who the traitor was. He managed to get the attention of John who was next to Jesus at the table and he asked John to find out who the traitor might be. John leaned over near Jesus and asked, “Lord, who is it?” Jesus told him that he would dip a piece of bread in the bowl and give it to the one who was about to betray him. Then he gave the bread to Judas, saying to him, “What thou doest, do quickly.” No one at the table knew what John had said to Jesus and they did not know the significance of the act of Jesus in giving the bread to Judas. They heard Jesus’ words to Judas, but thought that he was asking Judas, since he was the treasurer, to go and purchase something needed for the feast, or to give something to the poor. It was a perilous moment. If Peter and the other disciples had known that Judas had taken money from the priests and was about to direct them to the place where they could seize Jesus, what would have happened? We know that Jesus saw



the danger and that he was not thinking of his own safety when he advised Judas to withdraw at once from the room.

Perhaps Judas had learned that Jesus would be in the Garden on Olivet along toward midnight and was glad of an excuse to hurry away to the priests who were waiting impatiently for some word from him. Perhaps he felt, too, the growing peril of his situation. He now knew that Jesus understood his plans and he was conscious of suspicious glances cast at him by some of his fellow disciples. They must have known him well enough, especially since the incident in the home at Bethany, to suspect that he might be the traitor. So Judas made haste to leave. John says that he "went out straightway," which means that he left at once and in some haste. Then John adds the significant phrase, "and it was night."

**The Betrayal.** Matt. 26:47-50. Judas had planned the matter with utmost detail. He had told the priests and officers that when they found Jesus and the disciples in the Garden, he would go up to Jesus and salute him and kiss him. At this sign the officers were to seize Jesus and hurry him away for trial. And so the plan was carried out. It was a time of the full moon, but it may have been rather dark under the shadows of the olive trees. Judas, however, could recognize Jesus, and coming up to him he said, "Hail, Rabbi," and kissed him. Jesus, thinking always of the safety of others, said, "Friend, do that for which thou art come." Peter drew his sword and a fight had already begun, but Jesus was master of the occasion. Peter would have fought to the death and so would the others, but Jesus would not permit it. So his disciples fled and Jesus was led away for an examination before the Jewish leaders.

**The Remorse of Judas.** Matt. 27:3-10. It was not long before a fearful reaction began to make itself felt in the heart of Judas. He hung about the outskirts of the crowd gathered at the palace of the high priests. He heard the false witnesses and saw the cruel blow which Jesus received from the officer as he stood before the court. He heard the crafty question of Caiaphas

and the burst of uproarious condemnation which followed Jesus' declaration that he was the Son of God. He saw them spitting on Jesus and striking him with their hands. It was more than Judas could stand. He had been too long in the company of Jesus to be utterly hardened like the Pharisees and priests. He fled from the court to seek the priests who had given him the thirty pieces of silver.

**"I Have Sinned in That I Betrayed Innocent Blood."** He found the priests and asked them to take back the silver they had given him. Awful remorse sounds through his statement to his partners in crime, "I have sinned in that I betrayed innocent blood." These proud leaders of the Jewish church despised the poor weakling who had been their tool and who now felt remorse for his part in the crime which had been committed. They would neither receive the money nor admit that they had given it to him. They answered him coldly, "What is that to us? see thou to it." Casting the silver coins upon the pavement of the sanctuary, Judas went out and hanged himself.

#### ROBBING THE SOUL TO ENLARGE THE BANK ACCOUNT

Louis Paul joined the Church at the age of sixteen. He was a fine, manly lad and faithful in the work of the Christian Endeavor Society and the Sunday school. At the age of twenty-one he became the teacher of a large class. He spent much time on his work with this class of boys. He invited them frequently to his home and carried on a club where they gathered one night in the week.

At about this time Louis started out in business for himself. He and another young man rented a building and started a shop for repairing automobiles. The undertaking proved to be a business success. The young partners added a sales department and began to make considerable money on the automobiles they sold. After a time they could hire men to do the repairing and give all their time to other details of the business. In a year or so they were selling many automobiles every week

and making more money out of the business than they had ever thought possible.

But what of the work Louis was doing in the church? Well, it was not prospering. In fact it was far from being in a satisfactory condition. Louis no longer had time to give to his boys. He had not invited them to his home for more than a year and the boys' club had gone out of existence. There was still a Sunday-school class, but it had only about half as many members as it once had had. Sometimes Louis was there, but quite often he was not. So there were a good many Sundays when the class had a substitute teacher, or was placed with some other class. Even when Louis got to the class, he had made little or no preparation to teach the lesson. He would come in a few minutes before the time for the closing of the opening service of the school and the beginning of the class period. He would find a quarterly and try to get something in his mind to give the boys before the recitation began. In fact, Louis was finding that in order to make his automobile business as large a success as he wished, he was compelled to give it so much time and thought that he had little of either for his Sunday-school work.

Now it is a law of our beings that we come to dislike things which we do in a careless way. The poor result of such effort turns one, in time, against the work itself. So it happened that although Louis had once loved Sunday-school work, he was now caring much less for it. He finally went to his pastor and told him that he wished to give up the class. He did not have time to do the work properly, he said, and he no longer enjoyed it as he once did. He was growing too old, he thought, to be a successful teacher of boys.

His pastor was a man of wisdom and had long ago detected the cause of the decline in that particular class. He urged Louis to give himself fully, once more, to the work which he had once so thoroughly enjoyed. He tried to point out to the young man that he ought to do it, for the sake of the boys and for his own sake. But Louis thought that it would be a fine thing to be rid of the responsibility of the class; then he could give more

attention to the work of his shop which was especially heavy on Sundays. He could go to church in the evening, he said, which would be just as well.

About this time the automobile dealers of the town began to have auto-racing on Sunday. Louis' partner insisted that they should enter their make of cars so that they could thus advertise them and make larger sales. So it happened that Louis fell into the habit of attending the auto races on Sunday. For a while he went to church in the evening, but became more and more irregular and finally ceased to attend at all. Years went by and he built up a very large business. He became a man of wealth. But there is something gone out of his life and it is something that he cannot buy for money. He sometimes wonders whether he has not purchased business success at too high a price.

#### THE LESSON PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, we pray that we may have the right ideas about money and the values which money represents. Teach us how to use our lives and all that we possess in such a way as to do the most good in the world. Help us to think of our time and our strength and our possessions as gifts from thee, values which we hold in trust for a little time and for which we must render an account. Give to us a just appreciation of spiritual values as compared with material values. Grant that none of us may be like the young man of whom we have heard in the story of this lesson, who sold the birthright of his soul for a mess of pottage. Amen.

#### THE LESSON HYMN

“Sun of My Soul, Thou Saviour Dear.” “Studies of Familiar Hymns,” page 25.

**EXPRESSIONAL SESSION****THE RIGHT USE OF MONEY**

Matt. 6:19-24; Luke 12:29-34

Jesus began very early to teach his disciples the right attitude toward money and toward the values which money represents. Had Judas heeded these lessons of Jesus the story of his life would have been different. Jesus spoke on this subject early in his ministry because it is a matter of much importance. He sought to teach his disciples that the Kingdom of God is the thing of greatest value. It is the treasure hid in the field and the pearl of great price.

In establishing their habits regarding money, young people should avoid two extremes. They must not become spendthrifts. They are not to be like the prodigal son who "wasted his substance with riotous living." Neither ought they to develop into servants of mammon who make money and the value it represents the goal of all their striving. Jesus taught his disciples to avoid both of these errors. He was not willing that even the fragments of the bread and the fish be wasted after he had fed the five thousand. He frequently warned his followers of the dangers which lay in the way of the person who was anxious for wordly gain.

SOME TRUTHS FROM THE LESSONS WE HAVE BEEN  
STUDYING

If Judas had loved Jesus more, he would have loved money less. His failure began in his lack of loving confidence in his Teacher.

Judas began with small and secret sins. He took a little money which had been intrusted to him and used it for himself. Such sins cannot be hidden because in time they grow so large that they cannot be covered. There is a large difference between Judas stealing a few pennies from the treasury and Judas selling his Lord for thirty pieces of silver, but the two are one in kind and, moreover, the latter grew out of the former.

The effect of the selfish hoarding of property is so noticeable that even savages, like the North American Indians, have understood it.

Business success is highly desirable but it may be purchased at so great a price that we make a very bad bargain.

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What do you believe led Judas to become a disciple of Jesus?
2. What were the underlying causes of the failure of Judas?
3. Show that the decline of Judas was gradual.
4. Tell of the turning point in the career of Judas.
5. Tell of the incident in the home at Bethany when Jesus was anointed by Mary.
6. Name some evils which spring from the love of money.
7. Why were the priests glad when Judas came to them?
8. Tell of the events in the upper room which preceded the withdrawal of Judas.
9. Did Judas truly repent? Give reasons for your answer.
10. Show how it is possible to purchase business success at too high a price.

### BIBLE VERSES

Deut. 8:11-17; Prov. 3:4; 15:17; Matt. 13:22; Luke 16:11; II Cor. 8:9; I Tim. 6:17-19; James 2:5; I John 3:17; Rev. 3:17,18.

### STUDY TOPICS

1. Jesus' Story About a Foolish Rich Man. Luke 12:13-21.
2. A Young Man Whose Wealth Kept Him from Becoming a Disciple. Mark 10:17-22.
3. Some of the Ways in Which We Can Do Good with Our Money. Luke 8:1-3; Acts 4:36.
4. The Folly of Spendthrift Habits. Luke 15:11-16.

5. The Benevolent Budget of Our Denomination. (For pastor or adult person.)

6. The Transformation of Scrooge. (A brief review of "The Christmas Carol," by Dickens.)

7. The Tenth Legion. (Write for information to United Society of Christian Endeavor, Boston, Massachusetts, for information.)

8. What Portion of a Christian's Income Ought to Be Given for the Support of the Church and Other Good Causes?

9. Are there Limits to the Profits Which a Christian can Conscientiously Receive from Business?

10. Old Testament Business Men Who Paid Too Dear for Financial Gain. Amos 8:4-10.

#### PUTTING THE TRUTHS OF THE LESSON INTO PRACTICE

Plan the organization of a Tenth Legion among the members of the class. Have a self-denial week, the proceeds to go into the treasury of the class and to be used for benevolent purposes. Make a budget of benevolences for the class, with names of causes to be helped and amount to be raised. Have members of the class present statements on the subject, "How I Spend a Dollar" (so many cents for recreation, books, charity, etc., all based on careful estimates). Discuss the question of how a Christian boy or girl ought to spend a dollar.

## CHAPTER XII

### JOHN MARK, WHO MADE GOOD IN HIS SECOND CHANCE

#### WEEK DAY SESSION

##### A LAD WHO WAS AMONG THE FOLLOWERS OF JESUS

Mark 14:51, 52; Acts 12:11-17; 13:4-14; 15:36-40; Col.  
4:10, 11

Jesus took little children into his arms and blessed them. After his triumphal entry and the driving of the money changers from the Temple, the boys and girls kept shouting a welcome to Jesus as the Messianic King. "Hosanna to the son of David," they cried over and over until the Jewish rabbis were sorely distressed and appealed to Jesus. They wished him to rebuke the children and to command them to keep still, but Jesus replied that if these young people should hold their peace, the very stones would cry out. It would be interesting to know the after-life of these children and youths who thus came into personal contact with Jesus in their early years. How many of them became, in manhood and womanhood, the heroic martyrs of the early church, we shall never know. The historians of the day did not pay much heed to matters pertaining to childhood and youth, so their meager accounts give us little information on the subject. The Scriptures, however, give us glimpses of a certain young man who may have been a boy follower and admirer of Jesus. In this lesson we are to learn what we can of a lad who may have been among the boys who, in the Temple, cried out "Hosanna to the son of David."

**A Young Man Who Followed Jesus from Gethsemane.**  
Mark 14:51, 52. Mark tells us of a certain young man who was with Jesus in Gethsemane and who followed the band of soldiers who had seized Jesus and were carrying him away to the high priests. Whoever this



young man was, he did not follow Jesus "afar off" as Peter did. He came so close to the mob which was carrying Jesus away that they laid hold on him. He escaped only by prompt and dexterous action. Slipping out of the garment on which his captors had laid hold, and which was his only article of clothing, he fled away naked. Mark is the only New Testament writer who mentions this incident and many Bible scholars believe that the young man of whom this story is told was Mark himself. He may have been only thirteen or fourteen years of age, since the Jewish boy was considered to be a young man after he had attained the age of about twelve years.

**A Home Where the Early Christians Gathered.** Acts 12:11-17. Like many other people of the New Testament, Mark had two names. His other name was John. His mother's name was Mary. She seems to have been a woman of strong character and she evidently owned considerable property. She had a house in Jerusalem and it became one of the first meeting places for the followers of Jesus. The family kept at least one servant, the maid named Rhoda who went to the door when Peter came to the house of Mary after his escape from the prison. We are not given any information concerning Mark's father. Mary may have been a widow. It has been suggested that the father of Mark may have been a Roman since the name, Mark, or Marcus, is a Roman name; but of this we cannot be sure.

In the life of Mark we have our first opportunity to observe the influences of the Christian religion over a life from the years of boyhood on into manhood. Mark was a boy when Jesus lived and preached. We have seen that it is probable that he knew Jesus and was among the company which followed him. Mark's mother was a loyal and true follower of Jesus. She made her home a house of prayer for the Early Church. John Mark is our first example of that group of fortunate youths who are blessed with a Christian home and Christian influences from their earliest years. His early life must have been a good deal like the life of a boy of our day who is blessed with a good mother and a Christian home.

**Mark Becomes a Missionary.** Acts 13:4-12. When we consider the kind of home and the kind of mother Mark had we are not surprised to learn that he grew up to be an idealist. The sublime task of winning the world for Christ appealed to him. He was ready to undertake the great adventure for the Kingdom when the opportunity came. Barnabas, the cousin of Mark, was planning with Paul their first missionary journey into the regions lying to the west of Palestine. Their first objective was the island of Cyprus lying in the northeastern part of the Mediterranean Sea. Mark was chosen as one of the company to go on this first journey. The island of Cyprus is not usually visible from the western coast of Palestine, but sometimes from the hills about Antioch, its mountain peaks may be seen standing out darkly against the red disk of the sun as it sinks into the sea. This vision of "lands in the setting sun" may have cheered the little company of pioneer missionaries as they came down to Antioch to begin their sublime task of winning the pagan world for the religion of Jesus.

**Mark Becomes a Quitter.** Acts 13:13, 14; 15:36-40. Having passed through the island of Cyprus from Salamis on the east coast to Paphos on the west coast, the missionaries set sail for the town of Perga in Pamphilia. At this point in the journey Mark left the company and returned to his home in Jerusalem. We do not know why he forsook the enterprise. We know, however, that Paul did not approve of his action, for when Paul and Barnabas were planning their second missionary journey and Barnabas proposed to take Mark with them, Paul objected and said that they ought not to take with them one who had been found wanting in their previous travels. Barnabas thought otherwise and as a result of these differences of opinion Paul and Barnabas separated. Barnabas took Mark with him and went back to Cyprus and Paul took Silas as his companion and went to Syria and Cilicia.

It may be that Mark's enthusiasm had grown cold because of the toils and hardships of a missionary's life. He was young, and youthful enthusiasm is apt to kindle

quickly and die down with equal rapidity. Mark may have been terrified by the hazardous undertaking which Paul proposed. The mountain gorges back of Perga are deep and tortuous and they were then as now the hiding places of robber bands. Beyond the mountains lay a wild and little-known region which Paul proposed to penetrate. Motives even less worthy than these we have mentioned may have stirred Mark's soul. It may be that he was jealous of the growing power of Paul. He may have thought that Paul was taking too much authority upon himself and ignoring the rights of his cousin, Barnabas, who up to this time seems to have been the leader of the undertaking. Mark may have differed with Paul as to the matter of receiving Gentiles into the company of Christian believers. Many of the early Christians believed that these Gentile converts to Christianity should observe the Jewish rites and ceremonies. Paul became the great defender of Christian liberty at a little later time in his history and this difference of opinion with Mark and Barnabas may have been just a foretaste of the conflict he was to wage later.

**Mark Makes Good.** Col. 4:10, 11; Philemon 24. We have reason to be thankful that the kindly spirit of Barnabas would not consent to have young Mark cast aside because he had once failed under trying circumstances. Barnabas insisted that Mark be given another chance and Mark made good. For some ten years or so after he went to Cyprus with Barnabas we lose sight of him; then we hear of him as Paul's companion and helper in Rome. He completely regained the confidence of Paul. Perhaps the influences of his early life, his mother's counsel and the memory of his Christian home, helped him to regain his feet after he had stumbled on the threshold of a great and useful career.

**Going Into the Jaws of Death for the Sake of his Friend.** II Tim. 4:1-11. When Paul was an old man and facing certain death in his dismal prison in Rome, he wrote a letter to his young friend and helper, Timothy. He told how many of his helpers had forsaken him as they saw certain death coming for him and perhaps for themselves. Paul knew that Timothy was of a different

type from these, so he confidently urged his young friend to "give diligence to come shortly." Paul knew that Timothy would come. He knew of one other who would likewise come even if the coming should cost him his life. So Paul wrote to Timothy, "Take Mark, and bring him with thee; for he is useful to me for ministering."

### NOT ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL

A young lad was persuaded that he ought to confess his faith in Christ and become a member of the Church. He knew that his parents would rejoice to see him take this step, but he was not sure how some of his young companions would look at the matter. He feared that some of the boys who were members of the baseball team with him might think the act of joining the Church was all right for women and girls but that only "sissy" boys would care to become Church members. Finally this lad determined that he would not be ashamed of the gospel and that he would declare himself a Christian, no matter what his companions might say or think. He soon found that all his fears as to how his companions would look on the matter were quite groundless. One of the boys who was his special friend in the school said to him, "You have done the right thing in joining the Church and I would do it myself if I only had the courage that you have." So this young lad learned that his act of accepting Jesus as his Master brought him the admiration of all people who are really worth while.

But there are some countries where the accepting of Jesus as the world's Saviour does not bring admiration, but contempt and persecution. Dr. H. H. Jessup has written an interesting account of a young Moslem called Kamil. Dr. Jessup calls him a modern Paul. When Kamil became a Christian his father and all his other relatives disowned him. Thousands of his fellow countrymen looked upon him as a reprobate and felt it their duty to take his life if the opportunity to do so should offer itself.

Kamil became a missionary to the wild Mohammedan tribes which live in southern Arabia and who come oc-

casionally to trade at the port of Aden. It is probable that his devotion to Christianity cost him his life, for only eighteen months after he had begun his work his life came to an end under mysterious circumstances. The Moslems among whom he died would not allow any investigation and refused the request of the missionaries that Kamil's body be given Christian burial. The service of Kamil was but brief, yet he accomplished much, for he showed the Christian world that even the most fanatical Mohammedans can be won for Christ, and that when once they become Christians they are as zealous for the cause of Christ as they have previously been for the cause of the false prophet.

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## SUNDAY SESSION

### THE LIFE OF JESUS WHICH MARK WROTE

#### Mark, ch. 1

Mark lived to be an old man and he gave many years to the work of a missionary and preacher. It is believed that he introduced Christianity into Alexandria; tradition says that he organized the first Christian church in that city. Yet Mark's greatest influence was not as a preacher and organizer of churches, but as a writer. The brief account of the life of Jesus which he wrote is one of the greatest books in the world and its influence over the life of mankind cannot be estimated.

Mark was peculiarly fitted for the task of writing a life of Christ. He became a believer in Jesus in his early youth. His early years were not wasted in selfish and sinful pleasure-seeking. If anyone is to do a great and lasting work for God and humanity, the precious morning hours of life must not be wasted. Mark was fortunate in having as his companions in labor some of the greatest men of the Early Church. He was with Barnabas and Paul in the very beginning of the foreign-missionary undertaking. He was Paul's companion and helper in Rome and doubtless in many other fields. He was the friend and helper of Peter. Most Bible students

believe that Mark's Gospel is, to a large extent, founded on what Mark heard from the lips of Peter. So close was the fellowship between Mark and Peter that Peter speaks of Mark as his son.

**The Narrative of an Eyewitness.** The Gospel of Mark gives the most vivid accounts of events connected with the life of Jesus to be found in the New Testament. Little touches here and there make us sure that we are reading a word picture from the pen of an eyewitness. It is Mark who tells us that when Jesus fed the multitudes the people sat down on the green grass and that their bright-colored clothing gave the different groups the appearance of flower beds on the green hillside. It is Mark who in describing the scene when the multitudes gathered to be healed in the streets of Capernaum before Peter's house, tells us that the crowds began to gather just as the sun went down over the Galilæan hills. Many students of the Bible believe that this vividness is due to the fact that Mark heard Peter tell of these events many times as he preached the gospel message. This may well be true, and yet is it not also probable that this vividness is due to the fact that Mark himself was also an eyewitness of the events he describes? The eyes of a boy would have taken in exactly such details as Mark describes and he would have carried more vivid images of these events through his life than would have been possible for an adult who witnessed the same things.

**The Mighty Messiah.** If you sometime visit the city of Venice in Italy you will doubtless see the great Cathedral of St. Mark. You will see the huge stone lions which decorate the portal of that vast church. The Early Church chose certain symbols to represent the writers of the four Gospels. They chose the lion as the symbol of Mark. Mark portrays the majestic strength of Jesus. He describes the events in the life of Jesus which show his power over disease and death and the intrigues of sinful men. His Gospel is one of the most dramatic books in the Bible. As we read the chapters of the Gospel of Mark we are impressed by the swift march of events which were crowded into the three years of Jesus'

public ministry. Mark's favorite word is "straightway." Note how many times he uses it in the chapter which we have chosen as our lesson for to-day.

These elements of power in the character of Jesus would have been especially impressive to a boy twelve or thirteen years of age. It is thought that Mark wrote this Gospel about A.D. 70. If such is the case, he must have been past fifty years of age at the time he wrote this Gospel. It is possible, nevertheless, that we have in this Gospel many of Mark's memories of his boyhood experiences with Jesus. In any case the Gospel of Mark is in a peculiar sense the young people's life of Jesus.

Mark's emphasis on the deeds of Jesus is seen in the fact that he gives only four of the parables of Jesus, whereas he recounts some eighteen of the miracles of Jesus. He gives at any length only one of the longer discourses of Jesus.

**Portions of the Gospel Narrative Peculiar to Mark.** Mark's great contribution to the cause of Christ lies in the fact that he has given to the world a conception of the character of Jesus which, without the aid of this vivid and dramatic narrative, might have been overlooked by many. Nevertheless, there are certain parables of Jesus and certain events in his life of which we should have known nothing had not Mark written his Gospel. Two of the miracles of Jesus are recounted only by Mark. They are the cure of the deaf and dumb man, Mark 7:31-37, and the cure of the blind men, recorded in Mark 8:22-26.

Mark likewise tells of two parables of Jesus which are not mentioned by the other Gospel writers. One of these is found in Mark 13:34-36 and is sometimes called the Parable of the Watching Porter. It is a very striking little parable. The householder goes away into another country and assigns to his servants the particular work which each was to do. He gave the porter the task of watching for the whole household. Then Jesus said to his disciples: "Watch therefore: for ye know not when the lord of the house cometh, whether at even, or at midnight, or at cockcrowing, or in the morning; lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say

unto you I say unto all, watch." Christian people must be the spiritual watchmen for the world. They must be able to read the signs of the times and give due warning and guidance, for Christians are the watching porters for the spiritual safety of humanity.

The other parable which Mark alone records is found in Mark 4:26-29. It may well be called the Boys' and Girls' Parable. Its picture of the growth of a plant of wheat, "first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear," is a perfect picture of the spiritual development of a boy or girl under the wise nurture of Christian parents and teachers and the abounding grace of God. It may be that Mark remembered this parable of Jesus because he had found it to be a true picture of his own life, for as we have seen his was a life of spiritual growth.

#### THE COURAGE WHICH IS BORN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

The World War gave us many illustrations of the fact that lofty courage and righteousness of life usually go together. The young men who were ready at all times to face deadly perils were for the most part those who had been brought up in Christian homes and who had been Sunday-school boys. Tough characters who had been accustomed to hang around the saloons before the war did not usually make good soldiers. They made more trouble for their commanding officers than they did for the enemy. One of the leading American generals said that this type of soldier seldom got to the front.

The War likewise gave an illustration of this principle on a larger scale than the individual cases we have noted. The armies which did not hesitate to bombard cities where the chief victims must needs be women and children, and which terrorized the communities which fell under their control, were the best disciplined and the best equipped troops the world had ever seen, but in the end they were found to be wanting in the fundamental requirements for a truly great military force. In the hour of success these troops were exultant and cruel, but in the hour of adversity they lacked the heroic ele-



ments of character which alone could have caused them to stand and turn defeat into victory. The war proved that, even from a military standpoint, "righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people."

### THE LESSON PRAYER

We thank thee, our Father in heaven, for the joys and opportunities of youth. Teach us to use these early years in such a way as to honor thee and in such a way as to fit ourselves to serve thee with efficiency when we take up our life tasks. Help us to be diligent and faithful in the performance of our present duties. Show us the way which thou hast chosen for our feet and give us the courage and wisdom which we need to walk in that way constantly and joyfully. Give to us a continual growth in Christian character so that we may continually become more obedient to thee and to those in authority over us and so that we may have an increasing sympathy with all thy children. Reveal the beauty and perfection of the character of Jesus to us so that we may see him as he is and may be inspired to earnest effort to gain something of his perfection of character. We pray for the work of the missionaries who are preaching the gospel of Christ in foreign lands. Give them wisdom and strength so that their tasks may be well done and so that many may be brought to the light of truth through a knowledge of Jesus who is the Light of the world. We ask for the sake of thy Son, our Lord. Amen.

### THE LESSON HYMN

"A Mighty Fortress Is Our God." "Studies of Familiar Hymns," page 155.

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## EXPRESSIONAL SESSION

### COURAGEOUS RIGHTEOUSNESS

II Sam. 12:1-15a

Our Scripture lesson is about the courageous prophet, Nathan, who dared to go to King David and rebuke that monarch for a great sin which he had committed.

Nathan took his life in his hands when he went to stand before King David. He had every reason to expect that the king would order his head taken off. He could hardly expect any other result from a monarch of that day, but in obedience to God's commandment he went to the king and spoke the words which God had told him to speak. The Bible is full of illustrations of courageous righteousness. So, for that matter, is the history of every nation and every race. The Bible and secular history likewise have some illustrations of cowardly unrighteousness. An investigation of these illustrations seems to prove that a life which is pure and righteous is apt to be more deeply and truly courageous than a life which has been marred by impurity and selfishness and cruelty.

#### SOME TRUTHS FROM THE LESSONS WE HAVE BEEN STUDYING

John Mark learned to be courageous through fellowship with Jesus. The most heroic characters of history have learned to be brave in the school of Jesus.

Lofty courage and tender compassion existed side by side in the character of Jesus. Unselfishness is an element of bravery, but selfishness and cruelty make a good soil for the development of cowardice.

John Mark had a courageous mother to set him a good example, for she was a follower of Jesus and helper of the Church when it was dangerous to be a Christian.

Mark showed his courage by becoming a missionary, which was in that day about the most perilous occupation he could have chosen.

The older he became, the more courageous Mark grew. In his youth he sometimes gave way to fear, but he learned, in time, to be courageous like his Master.

#### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What evidence have we that John Mark knew Jesus?
2. Tell what you can of the early life of John Mark.
3. Tell of Mark's first missionary experiences.

4. Why did Mark return to his home before completing the first missionary journey?

5. Tell what you can of the later years of Mark's career.

6. What evidences have we that the Gospel of Mark was written by an eyewitness?

7. What characteristics of Jesus are emphasized in Mark's Gospel?

8. Name some portions of the Gospel of Mark which contain teachings of Jesus or incidents in the life of Jesus which are not found in the other Gospels.

9. Who wrote the hymn which we are to study in this lesson? Give a brief account of the life of the author of the hymn.

10. What did the events of the World War show regarding the sources of true courage?

#### BIBLE VERSES

Ps. 18:1, 2; Prov. 28:1; Isa. 12:2; 50:7; John 7:25, 26; Acts 4:13; 13:46; Eph. 3:12; Heb. 10:19-22; I John 2:28.

#### STUDY TOPICS

1. Incidents in the Life of Jesus Which Show His Courage. Luke 13:31-33; John 11:1-10.

2. The Courage of Paul the Prisoner. II Tim. 4:6-8.

3. Paul's Courage in a Storm at Sea. Acts, ch. 27.

4. Nehemiah, a Man of Prayer and Action. Neh., ch. 4.

5. The Cowardice of Adam. Gen. 3:9-15.

6. A Scoundrel Who Was Terrified by the Preaching of Paul. Acts 24:24-26. (Read about Felix in a Bible dictionary.)

7. The Source of Joshua's Courageous Character. Josh. 1:7-9.

8. Elijah, a Man of Courageous Righteousness. I Kings 21:17-26.

9. Circumstances Which Demand Courageous Righteousness in Our Day. (Illustrations: to confess faith in Christ when in the presence of unbelievers; to refuse

to do that which is evil even when all our companions urge us to the evil acts and practice these things themselves.)

10. Martin Luther at the Diet of Worms. (See any Church History.)

#### PUTTING THE TRUTHS OF THE LESSON INTO PRACTICE

There are many opportunities for young people to manifest a spirit of courageous righteousness. A few of these opportunities which are almost sure to come to every Intermediate boy or girl are as follows:

1. To take part in the discussion of the topics in the Christian Endeavor meetings and other like gatherings for young people.

2. To lead young people's meetings.

3. To lead in public prayer.

4. To talk with companions on matters of religion and urge them to become professed followers of Christ.

5. To refuse to desecrate Sunday by buying or selling, by unnecessary travel, or by unworthy forms of amusement.

6. To refuse immodest types of clothing even though these types are all the style.

7. To speak in defense of the Christian religion and the Christian Church when in the company of those who are inclined to ridicule sacred things.

8. To manifest a spirit of broad sympathy and universal brotherhood toward people of other races and other nationalities.

9. To manifest a spirit of fellowship with other young people who are too poor to wear the best of clothes or to live in costly dwellings.

10. To condemn anything in the conversation of their companions which is low and mean and unjust.

CHAPTER XIII  
LUKE, THE GOOD PHYSICIAN  
WEEK DAY SESSION

A MODEST MAN WHO DID A GREAT WORK IN A  
QUIET WAY

Acts 16:6-15; Col. 4:14; Luke 1:1-4; II Tim. 4:9-18

We take up in this lesson the study of another New Testament writer who has given to the world an account of the life and teachings of Jesus. Luke was a Gentile. In him we have an illustration of what the religion of Jesus can do for one born in paganism. Luke is a kind of first fruits of that vast army of Christian believers who have been won for Christ from the Gentile nations. Luke may have been a Greek and it is thought that he spent his boyhood in Troas, which is in the same district as the ancient Troy concerning which Homer wrote. The early life of Luke must have been very different from the early life of Mark. Because his training and experiences had been different, Luke was able to write a life of Jesus which is different from all the other Gospels, and thus we are able to gain a better conception of the character of Jesus than we could otherwise have attained.

**The Friend and Companion of Paul.** Acts 16:6-15. Luke evidently first met Paul at Troas when Paul was on his second missionary journey. We can trace Luke's presence with Paul through the book of The Acts by noting the pronouns which he uses. When Luke was with Paul, he uses the pronouns "we" or "us" in describing the events of the journey. When he was not with Paul and others were accompanying the disciple, he uses the pronoun "they." In this way we know that Luke joined Paul at Troas and went with him as far as Philippi. Luke evidently remained in Philippi while Paul pursued his journey southward to other cities of Macedonia and Greece. When Paul again came to Philippi on his third

missionary journey, Luke rejoined him there, so it is probable that Luke had been making that city his home during Paul's absence. Possibly he had been caring for the converts to Christianity who had turned away from paganism under the preaching of Paul. When Paul again left Philippi, Luke went with him. He was with Paul in Jerusalem and probably cared for him during the long imprisonment at Cæsarea. He sailed with Paul on the voyage which ended in shipwreck on the island of Malta and afterward accompanied him to Rome.

**The Beloved Physician.** Col. 4:14. Luke was a physician, and he seems to have made it his life work to accompany Paul and care for him through the years of stirring adventure and arduous toil which marked the career of that great missionary to the Gentiles. Paul seems to have suffered most of his life from some physical affliction and during his later years the infirmities of age began to lie heavily upon him. Perhaps if it had not been for the constant companionship and care of Luke, Paul could not have accomplished so much for the Kingdom of God. Paul appreciated the unselfish devotion of his good friend and speaks of him as "the beloved physician."

**A Careful and Scholarly Writer.** Luke 1:1-4. Luke was an author as well as a physician. He found time to write an account of the life and teachings of Jesus and a brief history of the Early Church which we call *The Acts of the Apostles*. Luke did his work with great care. He tells us that he "traced the course of all things accurately from the first." He talked with many who had known Jesus and heard him. He had an opportunity to meet many of these people who had been with Jesus and who had been witnesses of the resurrection. It seems certain that Luke knew Mary, the mother of Jesus, and the group of women who were among the followers of Jesus. He tells us many incidents concerning the childhood of Jesus which are not mentioned by the other Gospel writers, and he adds the significant phrase, "His mother kept all these sayings in her heart."

**A Humble Man Who Kept Himself in the Background.** Luke wrote a large part of the New Testament and yet

he never mentioned his own name in any sentence that he penned. He uses the first person singular of the pronoun "I" only twice. In this respect he is very different from Paul. Paul did not hesitate to use his own name frequently. He begins every letter with some such phrase as "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ." He stoutly defended his right to be called an apostle and declared that he was not a whit beneath the other apostles. He urged his converts to follow him as an example. This difference is discreditable to neither, Paul nor Luke. They differed in disposition, that is all. God has willed that people should thus differ. They are fitted for different tasks because they differ thus in disposition. Paul did a work which Luke could not have done because Paul was strongly aggressive and self-assertive, but Luke likewise did a work which Paul could not have done. We feel as we read the beautiful story of Jesus which Luke wrote that there was nothing affected and forced in Luke's self-effacement. He was so intensely interested in the wonderful narrative that he simply lost sight of himself. When he was Paul's helper and companion, he likewise lost sight of self in the great cause in which he was engaged and the great leader with whom he was associated. People are apt to overlook the men and women who are of the Luke type. They are not appreciated in the day in which they live and sometimes not even after they are dead. But people of the Luke type do not care very much about these things. If the cause they love prospers, they are content. There are no mistakes, however, in the judgments of God, and in the great hereafter human lives will be seen in the true light of actual worth and achievement. Perhaps Jesus had people of the Luke type in mind when he said that many that are last shall be first.

**"Only Luke Is with Me."** II Tim. 4:9-18. When Paul was brought to his final trial before Nero, a kind of panic seems to have seized his companions. Demas and Titus and Crescens found excuses for a hasty departure from Rome. It is little wonder that they fled in terror, for Nero was a ferocious monster who burned the Christians as human torches to light his gardens at

night. Perhaps they were justified in leaving the city and not sacrificing themselves just then for the cause they loved. There was one, however, who would not flee. He had stood by Paul through mobs and shipwrecks and imprisonments, and he would not forsake him now. In writing to Timothy Paul says, "only Luke is with me."

The time and manner of Luke's death are unknown. It is probable, however, that he perished in the Neronian persecution soon after his great companion had laid down his life in witness to the Christian faith.

### "DOCTOR LUKE OF THE LABRADOR"

Wilfred Grenfell has been called the "Doctor Luke of the Labrador." For many years he has been a medical missionary among the poor fisherfolk of the bleak Labrador coast. He ministers to their bodies, minds, and spirits, for he is physician, teacher, and preacher. Like Luke, the beloved physician, Dr. Grenfell has lost sight of self in the pursuit of a great cause. The story of what he has done for the people of Labrador is well known, but that is not the whole story. No man can give himself to unselfish service for many years and not have definite results of that service registered in his own personality. What has his life of helpfulness and unselfishness done for Dr. Grenfell?

In the first place, it has made him happy and contented. He is one of the happiest men imaginable, one of the most cheerfully contented. Yet he has few of the things which most people regard as necessary to their happiness. He is far from the automobiles, the moving-picture shows, the theaters, the daily papers. He has no possession of extensive lands, no huge and growing bank account, no stocks or bonds, or interest-bearing investments. His life is an illustration of a fundamental law which unchangeably decrees that happiness shall be found in the way of purity, duty, and service, and not in the way of selfish pleasure-seeking.

In the second place, Dr. Grenfell's life of service has given him power and confidence. He has accomplished things that are of utmost importance. There is about



his whole personality something which continually says, "I can." When a man lays hold on a task in which he is a coworker with Jesus Christ, he learns to say, "I can do all things in him that strengtheneth me."

In the third place, Dr. Grenfell's life of service has given him vision and optimism. He sees before him possibilities for far greater things than he has yet accomplished. He believes in the future and is sure that things will ultimately come out right. What a reward for doing God's will and accomplishing his work—joy and contentment, power and confidence, vision and optimism! It was this deep spiritual truth that Jesus had experienced and of this truth he spoke when he said: "My meat is to the will of him that sent me, and to accomplish his work. Say not ye, 'There are yet four months, and then cometh the harvest?' behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, that they are white already unto harvest. He that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal." John 4:34-36.

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## SUNDAY SESSION

### THE BIOGRAPHER OF JESUS AND THE HISTORIAN OF THE EARLY CHURCH

Luke 7:36-50; 10:25-37; 15:11-32; 16:19-31

Luke wrote a larger part of the New Testament than did any other person except Paul. He thus made a contribution of inestimable value toward the establishment of Christianity in the world. In this lesson we are to learn a few facts concerning the two New Testament books which Luke wrote.

### LUKE'S BIOGRAPHY OF JESUS

The great contribution which Luke made to our knowledge of the life and teachings of Jesus will be made plain by a study of the following list of parables of Jesus and miracles of Jesus which are found only in the Gospel of Luke:

**Parables of Jesus Peculiar to Luke:**

The Two Debtors.....	Luke	7:36-50.
The Good Samaritan.....	Ch.	10:25-37.
The Friend at Midnight.....	Ch.	11:5-8.
The Rich Fool.....	Ch.	12:16-21.
The Servants Watching.....	Ch.	12:35-40.
The Steward on Trial.....	Ch.	12:42-48.
The Barren Fig Tree.....	Ch.	13:6-9.
The Great Supper.....	Ch.	14:16-24.
The Tower and the Warring King..	Ch.	14:28-33.
The Lost Piece of Money.....	Ch.	15:8-10.
The Prodigal Son.....	Ch.	15:11-32.
The Unjust Steward.....	Ch.	16:1-13.
The Rich Man and Lazarus.....	Ch.	16:19-31.
The Master and Servant.....	Ch.	17:7-10.
The Importunate Widow.....	Ch.	18:1-8.
The Pharisee and the Publican.....	Ch.	18:9-14.
The Pounds.....	Ch.	19:12-27.

**Miracles of Jesus Peculiar to Luke:**

Jesus Passing Through the Crowd at Nazareth .....	Luke	4:28-30.
Draft of Fishes.....	Ch.	5:1-11.
Widow's Son Raised to Life at Nain.	Ch.	7:11-17.
Woman's Infirmity Cured.....	Ch.	13:11-17.
Dropsy Cured.....	Ch.	14:1-6.
Ten Lepers Cleansed.....	Ch.	17:11-19.
The Ear of Malchus Healed.....	Ch.	22:50, 51.

It will be seen from this list that we are indebted to Luke for all the knowledge we have concerning seventeen of the parables of Jesus and seven of his miracles. What a loss it would be if such parables as that of the Good Samaritan, the Prodigal Son, and the Rich Man and Lazarus were taken out of the New Testament and forever lost to the human race! They are not lost because Luke under God's guidance labored earnestly and faithfully in his task of gathering up the teachings of Jesus and recording them for future generations.

**The Gospel of Human Sympathy and Universal Brotherhood.** The Gospel of Luke is very different from that

of Mark. Whereas Mark saw in Jesus the mighty Messiah vanquishing disease and death and putting his antagonists to silence, Luke saw in Jesus the compassionate Saviour of the world. Jesus was all that Mark saw in him, but Mark did not see all of Jesus. Neither did Luke. We must take all the Gospel narratives together to gain even the beginning of a right conception of the greatness of the character of Jesus.

A glance through the list of the parables of Jesus peculiar to Luke will make it plain that Luke was specially attracted to the teachings of Jesus which dealt with such subjects as the universal and unchangeable love of God for all his children, the common brotherhood which unites all mankind, and the equality of all men as to the value which the heavenly Father has placed upon them. Because Luke was himself unselfish and sympathetic and democratic, the teachings of Jesus concerning brotherhood and service were especially attractive to him. Perhaps his training as a physician and his experiences as a practitioner had helped to develop in him a spirit of sympathy which gave him a likeness to the Great Physician. In the providence of God, this beloved physician had been led through a course of preparation that he might do a great work. He had been chosen from among Gentile peoples to do a task for which few Jews, because of their early training, were fitted.

**A Record of the Boyhood and Young Manhood of Jesus.** Luke 2:40-52. Lukes gives us practically all we know concerning the boyhood and young manhood of Jesus. His accounts are brief but wonderfully suggestive. They are the only accounts we have in all literature of a perfect childhood and youth. Perhaps it was his sympathy with children and young people which made this kindly physician search diligently until he had gathered and verified these few but all-important facts concerning the early life of Jesus. Luke's sublime statement concerning the boy Jesus is all we really need to know: "And the child grew, and waxed strong, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him." This brief statement assures us that Jesus was perfect in his physical, mental, and spiritual development.

In his interesting account of Jesus' visit to the Temple at the age of twelve, Luke gives us the first recorded words of Jesus. In one brief verse Luke covers eighteen quiet years which Jesus spent at Nazareth, "And Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men."

**A Record of the Prayer Life of Jesus.** Luke tells us more about the prayer life of Jesus than do any of the other Gospel writers. He tells us that Jesus was praying at his baptism when the Holy Spirit came upon him, that he had gone up on the mountain to pray that night when he was transfigured before his disciples, and that it was the prayers of Jesus which led the disciples to come to their Master with the request, "Lord, teach us to pray." Luke tells us that Jesus spent a whole night in prayer before choosing his disciples and that he prayed for those who were nailing him to the cross. We may well believe that Luke himself was a man of prayer and thus was aware of the important place which prayer held in the life of his Master.

### LUKE'S HISTORY OF THE EARLY CHURCH

In writing *The Acts of the Apostles* Luke did another service for the Christian religion which we cannot measure. Had it not been for Luke's account we should have known almost nothing concerning the beginnings of the Christian Church. We could have gleaned a little information from the letters of Paul, but this information would have been meager indeed.

**A Letter to a Friend.** Luke 1:1-4; Acts 1:1-5. The introductory words of Luke's Gospel and of *The Acts* reveal the interesting fact that both of these books were letters written to a friend of Luke's who bore the name of Theophilus. In his modesty Luke had no idea that he was writing documents which would live forever. He was gathering information concerning the life and teachings of Jesus and the facts of the Early Church in order that he might help a friend of his to stand firm in the faith and "know the certainty concerning the things wherein" he had been instructed.

**The Biographer of Peter and Paul.** If Luke had not written The Acts, we should have no certain knowledge concerning Peter's activities as an apostle, neither would there be much available information concerning any of the other disciples. We could gather some information concerning Paul from his letters, but much that is of great interest and value concerning him would be lost. As we read the portions of the New Testament written by Luke, it is well to remember that these priceless spiritual treasures were made possible for us because nearly nineteen hundred years ago a good physician thought of the spiritual welfare of a friend and took the time and pains necessary to gather accurate information concerning Jesus and the Early Church, that this friend might know the certainty of the things he had been taught. We know little about the life of Luke himself, because he seldom spoke of himself except when it was necessary to do so in speaking of others, but as we have seen he has given us abundant and valuable information concerning a number of his fellow laborers.

#### ARTHUR JACKSON, THE HERO OF MUKDEN

As a student in college and university, Arthur Jackson was an honor pupil. He was also a leader in athletics. Having won a hotly contested game of football by his skillful and powerful playing, he became the hero of his school. His successes did not spoil him. He did not become conceited; on the contrary, his success seemed to turn his thoughts toward a life of service. He early determined to become a medical missionary. After his graduation from Cambridge he was sent by the United Free Church of Scotland as a medical missionary to Manchuria.

He had hardly reached his new field when circumstances arose which tested his spirit and his devotion to the cause he had come to advance. A dreadful malady known as the pneumonic plague had broken out in Manchuria. It had swept through the northern part of that country and had crept steadily southward. Cases were already reported in Mukden when Dr. Jackson arrived. Thousands of Chinese coolies were at that season of the

year returning from Manchuria to their homes in China. It seemed certain that they would carry the plague into the densely settled regions of China and no one could tell how many thousands of lives would be sacrificed. The only way to avert the disaster was to hold these Chinese workmen in Mukden, have them examined by a competent physician, and place in permanent quarantine all who gave any signs of the disease. The post was one of utmost peril and Dr. Jackson knew it, but he unhesitatingly volunteered his services. He stood faithfully at his task as defender of China's millions from the "black death." Then he was stricken by the plague and died.

Dr. Jackson's missionary service extended over a period of only three months, but we must not think of the results of his service as meager. He doubtless accomplished more in that brief period than many people accomplish in a long lifetime. His spirit of unselfish service and his death in the pathway of duty made a profound impression on many of the leading men of China. The viceroy of Manchuria, Hsi Liang, said of him: "Dr. Jackson was moved by the heart of the Saviour who gave his life to the world. He responded nobly when we asked him to help our country in its need. He went forth daily to help us in our fight with the plague and he labored where the pest lay thickest. Amidst the groans of the dying, he struggled to cure the stricken, to find medicine to stay the evil. Worn by his efforts, the pestilence seized him, and took him from us."

The viceroy sent ten thousand dollars to the family of Dr. Jackson, but Dr. Jackson's mother graciously sent it back to Manchuria for the purpose of founding a Christian hospital in the city where her son had laid down his life for Christ and humanity. Hearing of this, Hsi Liang added seven thousand to the gift and to-day there is a splendid hospital in Mukden, ministering to the people for whom Dr. Jackson gave his life, a monument to a noble and unselfish man who was found faithful even unto death.

Lives like that of Dr. Jackson, and more especially deaths like his, are making an irresistible impact against

the strongholds of paganism. Pagan philosophy and pagan religion are hardened against word-of-mouth arguments, but for unselfish service of the Dr. Jackson kind, it has no answer.

### THE LESSON PRAYER

We ask thee, our God and Father, to give us the spirit of love and service. We would have our ambitions center in Christ and his Kingdom and not in ourselves. If we meet with reverses, help us to be persevering and faithful. If we meet with personal successes, grant that we may be humble and thankful. Teach us to know thy will concerning our lives, that we may not waste our time and efforts on things that are not worth while. Teach us to be morally earnest, spiritually pure, and truly grateful. Bless the Church of thy Son in all its activities, in all places where it has been established, and hasten its spread over all the earth. Lead the nations of the earth in thy ways of peace and brotherhood. We ask these things in the name of thy Son. Amen.

### THE LESSON HYMN

“When I Survey the Wondrous Cross.” “Studies of Familiar Hymns,” page 127.

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## EXPRESSIONAL SESSION

### CHRISTIAN HUMILITY

Matt. 18:1-6; 20:20-28

The Christian life is very largely a matter of right relationships and right attitudes. The Christian maintains right relations with his fellow men, right relations with himself, right relations with God. One of the most important elements of these right personal attitudes is called “humility.”

There is a right kind of humility and a wrong kind of humility, just as there is a right kind of pride and a wrong kind of pride. That is why we have chosen

to discuss "Christian" humility in this lesson. Jesus was trying to teach his disciples Christian humility in the passages of Scripture we are to study in this lesson. He set a little child before his disciples as an object lesson in Christian humility. A child is willing and anxious to learn. You never saw a child which had that kind of intellectual pride which despises the intellectual possessions of others; which struts and says, "I have no need that anyone tell me anything."

Jesus told his disciples that his followers must not be haughty and proud like the Gentiles who "lord it over" those whom they regard as inferiors, but that his followers must have a spirit of humble service which would make them ministers of their fellow men. He told them that true greatness lay in service, in ministering to others rather than in being ministered to by others.

#### SOME TRUTHS FROM THE LESSONS WE HAVE BEEN STUDYING

Luke possessed Christian humility. It made him forget self in his desire to serve others and advance the cause of Christ.

Luke was free from that wrong kind of humility which leads to self-depreciation. He had self-confidence and did not fear to undertake great tasks with the help of God.

No one can ever tell the good which may be accomplished by an act of humble service. Luke wrote two letters to a friend in order to help his friend to have a clear and strong faith in the Christian religion. These letters were doubtless a help and a blessing to Luke's friend, but they did not end there; they have brought help and blessing to millions of people.

Humility is necessary for great scholarship. Luke was humble enough to learn from every available source.

Humility and fidelity are closely related. Humility refuses to put self-interest first. That is why Luke stood by Paul when others forsook him.

There is a sense in which we understand and appreciate the character of Jesus only as we become in some measure like him.



## REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Name some ways in which Luke was fitted to write a life of Christ.
2. Of what service was Luke to Paul?
3. On what journeys did Paul have Luke for a companion?
4. What evidences have we that Luke was a humble man?
5. Tell of Luke's fidelity to Paul.
6. What effect has Wilfred Grenfell's work had?
7. Name some parables of Jesus given only by Luke.
8. Name some of the leading characteristics of the Gospel of Luke.
9. Name some events in the life of Jesus which are told only in Luke's Gospel.
10. Why is The Acts an important part of the New Testament?

## BIBLE VERSES

Prov. 15:33; 22:4; Micah 6:8; Matt. 11:28, 29; Mark 9:34-37; Eph. 4:1-3; Phil. 2:3; Col. 3:12; James 4:10; I Peter 5:15.

## STUDY TOPICS

1. The Perfect Humility of Jesus. Phil. 2:5-11.
2. The Humility of Moses. Ex. 3:11.
3. The Humility of Jeremiah. Jer. 1:6.
4. Humility Not Inconsistent with a True Self-Confidence Which Undertakes Great Tasks. Isa. 6:1-8.
5. Pride Which Went Before a Fall. Dan. 4:28-33.
6. The Peril of a Proud and Haughty Spirit. Jer., ch. 43.
7. Pride and Spiritual Degradation Existing Together. Isa. 28:1-8.
8. Forms of Humble Service Open to Intermediate Pupils.
9. Great Americans Who Have Been Men of Humble Spirit.
10. Why Self-Respect and Humility Are Both Essential to Lofty Character.

## PUTTING THE TRUTHS OF THE LESSON INTO PRACTICE

Let each member of the class find some form of humble service for the week intervening between this expressional meeting and the next. Have reports on these activities at the next meeting. Such services as helping in the home, taking flowers to those who are sick, writing post cards to "shut-ins," and making Christmas presents for poor children, would be expressional activities suitable for the lessons of this chapter.

CHAPTER XIV  
STEPHEN AND PHILIP THE EVANGELIST  
WEEK DAY SESSION  
THE FIRST CHRISTIAN MARTYR

Acts, chs. 6, 7

A great religious revival began on the Day of Pentecost. From that time the Christian Church began to grow rapidly. The utmost good will existed among the members of the newly organized Church. So deep was the sense of fellowship that many of these early Christians sold their property and put their money into a common fund from which any member of the Church could draw in case of need. We admire the splendid spirit of friendship which prompted these early Christians to put their money into a common fund, but it is not surprising to learn that trouble arose concerning the distribution of this money.

**The First Deacons Appointed.** Acts 6:1-6. Many Jews had left Palestine to dwell in other lands. These Jews with their descendants had for the most part ceased to speak the Aramaic language spoken by the Jews of Palestine. Most of them spoke the Greek language and they were therefore called Grecian Jews. Many of these Grecian Jews came back to Jerusalem to the great feasts of the Jewish people and some of them again took up their residence in Palestine. Some of these Grecian Jews had become Christians, so there were both Palestinian Jews, or Hebrews, as they are called in The Acts, and Grecian Jews in the Christian Church.

The Grecian Jews who had become Christians complained that their widows were not receiving a just share of the money which was held by the Church as a common fund. When these complaints reached the ears of the apostles, they called the Church together. The Church had grown so much that there was now a great multitude of believers. The apostles explained to their

brethren that it would not be wise for the twelve disciples to give up their work of preaching in order to attend to such matters as the distribution of the funds intended for the needy. They recommended that seven men who were "full of the Spirit and of wisdom" be chosen to attend to this task. So seven men were elected from the congregation. After they were chosen, they were ordained to their new office by prayer and by the apostles' laying their hands upon them. In this chapter we are to study about two of these first deacons of the Church.

**Rapid Growth of the Church.** Acts 6:7. Having thus settled their misunderstandings, these early Christians turned with renewed zeal to their task of winning converts to the Christian faith. The Church entered upon a period of rapid development. The account says that the number of the disciples in Jerusalem "multiplied . . . exceedingly." Many who held positions of responsibility became followers of Jesus. We are told that "a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith." But this period of peace and prosperity came to a sudden end.

**Stephen Accused of Blasphemy.** Acts 6:8-15. Among the seven men chosen to superintend the distribution of alms was a man named Stephen. He was probably himself a Grecian Jew since the name, Stephen, is a Greek name. He is named first in the list of deacons and he had probably been chosen because he was a man of ability and forceful character. Stephen was a preacher as well as a distributor of alms. Some of the Greek-speaking Jews who had not become Christians became greatly enraged at the preaching of Stephen. They began by denying the truth of certain things which Stephen said in some of his addresses. Getting the worst of the argument, they became still more enraged and going to the scribes and elders, they succeeded in persuading them that Stephen was a dangerous man. He was seized and brought before the sanhedrin. They accused him of speaking against the Temple and the law of Moses. They said that Stephen had declared that Jesus would destroy the Temple and change the customs

which Moses had delivered to the Jews. They hired certain witnesses to swear that they had heard Stephen speak blasphemous words against Moses and against God.

**Stephen's Address Before the Council.** Acts 7:1-53. Having heard the charges against Stephen, the high priest turned to him and asked, "Are these things so?" Stephen's reply to the high priest's question is a masterpiece of argumentative eloquence. Beginning with Abraham he sketched God's dealings with the Jewish people. He showed how from the time of Moses, the hope of a Redeemer had had a place in the thinking of the Hebrew people. He showed how the Jews had been slow to believe and obey Moses and the other leaders whom God had sent to them and had rebelled against Jehovah, their God. He quoted from the prophets to show that God is everywhere existing in power and authority and was not confined to a dwelling place in the Temple.

Stephen never finished his address. Having reached this point in his argument, he seems to have broken off his speech to hurl indignant and scathing accusations into the very faces of his accusers: "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Spirit: as your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets did not your fathers persecute? and they killed them that showed before of the coming of the Righteous One; of whom ye have now become betrayers and murderers; ye who received the law as it was ordained by angels, and kept it not."

**Stephen's Arguments Answered by Mob Violence.** Acts 7:54-60. When the enemies of Stephen heard this fearless accusation, they were aroused to a frenzy of hatred. The Bible account says, "They were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth." Stephen knew that his end had come. Turning his face away from the turbulent mob, he gazed upward and caught visions of that God who is ever standing "within the shadows, keeping watch above his own." He cried out, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." With a great

shout, the mob stopped their ears and rushed upon Stephen. Dragging him outside the city, they stoned him. There was in the mob a young man named Saul. He kept watch over the garments of those who were stoning Stephen. Stephen's last words were a prayer for mercy on those who were taking his life. Falling upon his knees, he cried out, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Then he added, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." Having said this, he "fell asleep."

"The martyr first, whose eagle eye  
 Could pierce beyond the grave,  
 Who saw his Master in the sky,  
 And called on him to save:  
 Like him, with pardon on his tongue  
 In midst of mortal pain,  
 He prayed for them that did the wrong:  
 Who follows in his train?"

#### WILLIAM AMBROSE SHEDD: A TWENTIETH CENTURY MARTYR

Late in July, 1918, Turkish troops and wild bands of Kurds moved south to attack the city of Urumia, Persia. Dr. William Ambrose Shedd, American missionary in Urumia, had been placed in charge of American relief in that city and had been made the representative of the American Government in that part of Persia. Urumia is the home of thousands of Assyrian and Armenian Christians. It was the destruction of these Christians which the Turks and Kurds had in mind as they advanced upon Urumia. Dr. Shedd urged the Armenians and Assyrians to arm themselves and to resist the advance of the enemy. He knew that British troops from Mesopotamia were on their way to the succor of the city and believed that by a stout resistance the city could be held until these troops should arrive.

As the enemy drew near the city, however, a wild panic seized the people. They piled their possessions into wagons and carts and a rabble of fugitives began to pour forth upon the roads leading south from the city. Dr. and Mrs. Shedd were almost the last to leave. Hardly had they departed from Urumia, when the Turks and Kurds came pouring into the city. They imme-

diately began to plunder and then they set fire to the dwellings they had looted. It was not long before the fleeing Assyrians and Armenians heard the thunder of cannon in their rear. The southward march became a panic-stricken flight. The people threw away their goods and some abandoned their children. Little babes, left alone by the roadside, wailed in the darkness as the fugitive host swept by. Dr. Shedd gathered a few of the men, collected arms and ammunition, and with this meager force defended the rear of the fleeing host. Galloping from point to point on his horse, he encouraged the defenders. He was a conspicuous mark for the Turks and Kurds and bullets flew thick about him, but he was unharmed. Night and day, without sleep and with little food, he kept guard at the rear of the fleeing multitude.

The enemy were constantly increasing in numbers and it seemed that they must soon overcome the little handful of defenders and fall upon the fleeing people. The horror of their impending fate added speed to the fleeing hosts and gave strength to the brave little band fighting in desperate energy against fearful odds. Then the hearts of Dr. Shedd and his helpers were gladdened by the sight of khaki-clad soldiers hurrying to their assistance. There were only nine of the British soldiers, but they had three machine guns and with these reënforcements the enemy were held at bay until further help arrived.

As soon as the immediate danger was over, Dr. Shedd began to feel the effects of the awful strain he had been under for so many hours. The heat of the August days had been terrific and he began to show symptoms of sunstroke. Signs of Asiatic cholera began to appear. He soon became violently ill. Mrs. Shedd cared for him the best she could, but they must keep moving and the rude vehicle in which the sick man rode had a rocky pathway to follow. A British surgeon was at last secured, but his help was found insufficient to give the stricken missionary permanent relief. In the early morning the cart in which Dr. Shedd was being carried was turned off the road for a little while, for the watchers saw that the end of their leader's life had come. When the

missionary had ceased to breathe, the British soldiers scraped a shallow grave beside a great rock, scattering dry grass over the broken ground to hide the spot from the pursuing enemy who would not only destroy the living but even desecrate the graves of the dead.

Dr. Shedd will long be remembered by the Assyrians and Armenians whom he saved from destruction by his heroic leadership. Their opinion of him is well expressed by the words of an Assyrian sheik who said: "He bore the burdens of the whole nation upon his shoulders to the last breath of his life. As long as we obeyed his advice and followed his lead we were safe and prosperous, but when we ceased to do that destruction came upon us. He was, and ever will be, the Moses of the Assyrian people." Adapted from "The Book of Missionary Heroes," by Basil Mathews.

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## SUNDAY SESSION

### AN ENTHUSIASTIC EVANGELIST OF THE EARLY CHURCH

Acts 6:5; 8:4-40; 21:8, 9

A great persecution of the Christians followed the stoning of Stephen. Under the leadership of Saul, a systematic effort was made to exterminate the new religion. Men and women were seized in their homes, cast into prison, tried before the courts, condemned and executed. The apostles of Jesus stood steadfastly at their posts of duty, but many others of the Christians fled from that city into the distant regions of Judea and into Samaria. The persecution was a blessing in disguise, for the fugitive Christians had not been silenced by their persecutors. Wherever they went, they continued to preach the gospel of Christ, and so it came to pass that the persecution, instead of destroying Christianity, only caused it to be scattered broadcast over most of Palestine.

**Philip Preaches in Samaria.** Acts 8:4-13. Among the seven deacons appointed to superintend the distribution



of alms among the Christians was a man named Philip. He was probably a Greek-speaking Jew like Stephen. Philip was one of those who left Jerusalem at the time of the persecution. He went to the city of Samaria. Immediately he began to preach Christ to the Samaritans. This act of Philip's shows us that he was a bold and enthusiastic Christian. Up to this time none of the disciples had preached to Gentiles. Philip had good grounds for his course of conduct, however, for Jesus had commanded his followers to "make disciples of all the nations" and Jesus himself had spent a number of days in a Samaritan village teaching the Samaritans concerning the Kingdom.

Philip's work in Samaria was very successful. We are told that "the multitudes gave heed with one accord unto the things that were spoken by Philip." We know from the account given by John that the Samaritans, as well as the Jews, believed in a coming Messiah. Indeed they seem to have held a purer conception concerning the nature and work of the Messiah than most of the Jews held. The Samaritans believed that the Messiah was to be a great teacher. The woman by the well of Sychar said to Jesus, "I know that the Messiah cometh . . . : when he is come, he will declare unto us all things." The Samaritan villagers, after they had seen Jesus and heard his teachings, said to the woman who had talked with Jesus by the well, "Now we believe, not because of thy speaking: for we have heard for ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Saviour of the world," John 4:25, 42.

We are not surprised, therefore, to learn that Philip's message concerning a Saviour should have been accepted by many in Samaria. We are told that "when they believed Philip preaching good tidings concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized."

There was a certain wonder-worker named Simon who had gained great influence in Samaria. This man had used the methods of the fortune teller and the necromancer to fool the people and to make them believe that he was a person of mysterious power. Even Simon was impressed by the message of Philip and became a pro-

fessed believer in Christ. He probably realized that Philip was not, like himself, a deceiver of the people, but had a message of truth and a power that was real.

**Peter and John Visit Samaria.** Acts 8:14-25. When the Christians in Jerusalem heard of Philip's successes in Samaria, they were glad and they sent Peter and John to Samaria to help in the work which Philip had so well begun. When Simon saw the power of Peter and John, he offered to give them money, saying, "Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay my hands, he may receive the Holy Spirit." Peter sternly rebuked Simon telling him that he had "neither part nor lot in this matter" and that his heart was "not right before God." Simon had tried to secure a place of prominence and power among the Christians by the use of money; therefore, attempts of this kind have come to be called "simony."

Peter and John preached for a time in the city of Samaria and before returning to Jerusalem they made a tour through the surrounding country preaching in the Samaritan villages. Through the work of Philip and these two disciples, Christianity was firmly planted in the land of the Samaritans.

**Philip and the Ethiopian.** Acts 8:26-40. Under God's direction Philip departed from Samaria and followed the highway which leads down from Jerusalem to Gaza. As Philip was walking along the road, a chariot came in sight. In this chariot was an Ethiopian who was a high official in the government of Candace, queen of Ethiopia. He had been up to Jerusalem to worship, probably at one of the great feasts of the Jews. He must have been a Jewish proselyte, that is, a Gentile who had learned about the God of the Jews and had become a believer in the Jewish religion. God put it into the mind of Philip to draw near to the chariot. Philip was such an enthusiastic Christian that he was ready to grasp every opportunity to tell people about Christ and was ready to talk on the subject even with a distinguished-looking stranger of another race and from a distant land.

As Philip drew near, he saw that the stranger was

reading from a book. He was reading aloud and to Philip's surprise he heard from the stranger's lips the familiar words of Isaiah's sublime prophecy concerning the suffering Servant of Jehovah. Philip was now all eager enthusiasm. He ran to the chariot and said to the Ethiopian, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" The Ethiopian replied, "How can I, except some one shall guide me?" The officer had just reached the verse which says:

"He was led as a sheep to the slaughter;  
 And as a lamb before his shearers is dumb,  
 So he openeth not his mouth:  
 In his humiliation his judgment was taken away:  
 His generation who shall declare?  
 For his life is taken from the earth." Isa. 53:7.

The officer had evidently been puzzling over the passage, for he said to Philip, "I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other?" Then beginning with the verse which had puzzled the Ethiopian, Philip "preached unto him Jesus." He explained to the Ethiopian how completely the words of Isaiah had been fulfilled in the sufferings and death of Christ.

This black man from the far-away countries of the Upper Nile had heard some rumor of Jehovah, the God of the Jews, and he had "followed the gleam," rejoicing in every new discovery of spiritual truth. He was quickly persuaded that Jesus was the Messiah and the Saviour of whom Isaiah had spoken. He was ready to become a professed follower of Jesus. As they drew near the pool of water beside the road, he said to Philip, "Behold, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?" So they stopped the chariot and Philip baptized him.

With a great joy in his soul, the Ethiopian then went on his way and Philip never saw him again. Nor does he again appear in the pages of the New Testament. What may have resulted from this conversion of a colored official on the Jerusalem-Gaza highway it is hard for us to conceive. We know that in the very early Christian centuries there was a Christian church in Ethi-

opia and that Abyssinia has remained a Christian country to this day. The Christianity of the African continent probably dates from that day when an enthusiastic and consecrated follower of Jesus made bold to draw near to a stranger and talk with him concerning the world's Redeemer.

**A Godly Family.** Acts 21 :8, 9. After his conversation with the Ethiopian, Philip went on his way. He preached in a number of the cities on the maritime plain of Palestine and finally came to the city of Cæsarea. Here he settled down, doubtless giving the rest of his life to preaching and teaching in this city by the sea. Many years after the events which have been recounted in this lesson, Paul came to Cæsarea and Philip was still there. Perhaps Philip had given up the work of a traveling evangelist because of his family. He was living with his four daughters when Paul visited him. We are told that these four daughters were prophetesses. This probably means that they, like their father, were earnest and enthusiastic followers of the Christ. A prophetess is a woman who reveals God to people and speaks God's messages for him. It adds much to our conception of the character of Philip to know that he was a father who brought up his children religiously.

#### THE DARING ENTHUSIASM OF DAVID LIVINGSTONE

The great leaders of the human race have been people of daring enthusiasm. Especially is this true of those who have by their zeal and consecration had a part in the spread of the Christian religion in the world and the overthrow of the enormous evils with which Christianity has had to grapple from time to time. David Livingstone was one of these people of unquenchable enthusiasm. Hardships could not dampen his zeal and no danger could cause him to turn back from the great enterprise he had undertaken.

One of the great ambitions of Livingstone was to suppress the slave trade. The awful ravages of the slave catchers aroused in him an indomitable determination to see the end of the traffic. There were times when, in exploring the African rivers, the paddle wheels of his

little steamboat became clogged with the bodies of black people, men, women, and children who had been killed by the Arab slavers. He found whole villages without inhabitant, all the people who had not been killed having been carried away as slaves.

Once as Livingstone and his Negro companions drew near an African village, they were taken for slave hunters by the villagers. Arrows whistled about the heads of Livingstone and his followers. The companions of Livingstone were about to paddle away but Livingstone forbade them to retreat. He ordered them to row the boat nearer to the land and soon he leaped overboard. The water was up to his waist but he waded ashore. Holding up his hands, he told the villagers that he had not come to them as a slave catcher. He rolled up his sleeves, showing them the white skin of his arms and asking them if the men who came for slaves were of the same color that he was. The Negroes who had come with Livingstone expected to see him fall with an arrow or spear through his body, but to their surprise the villagers did not harm him. Because of many incidents of this character the Negroes called Dr. Livingstone "The White Man Who Would Go On."

The labors of Livingstone and the accounts which he sent to Europe from Africa led civilized nations to see that slavery was "the open sore of the world." At the command of the British Empire and other nations, slavery has ceased in Africa and throughout the whole vast extent of that great continent to-day no person dares to lay the shackles of slavery upon another.

Adapted from "The Book of Missionary Heroes," by Basil Matthews.

#### THE LESSON PRAYER

Make us conscious, our Father in heaven, of the fact that many of the privileges we enjoy have been bought by the toil and devotion of those who have lived in the world before we were born. Give us a deep sense of gratitude to thee because thou hast raised up these devoted souls to bless the human race. Give us a sense of our obligation to thee. Help us to realize that we owe all that we have to thee. Forgive us if we have been

thoughtless and ungrateful. Forgive us if our labors for thy cause have been meager and lacking in enthusiasm. We would learn from the early Christians how to serve thee enthusiastically. We ask these blessings not only for ourselves but for all who profess to be followers of thy Son. Amen.

#### THE LESSON HYMN

“Thine For Ever! God of Love.” “Studies of Familiar Hymns,” page 253.

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### EXPRESSIONAL SESSION

#### ENTHUSIASTIC CHRISTIANITY

Acts 2:41-47; 4:32-35

As we read the opening chapters of The Acts, we are impressed with the enthusiasm of the early Christians. They were so enthusiastic for their religion and the new fellowship between all who believed Christ that they sold their property and placed the proceeds in a common fund to be used by any who had need among them. They continued “stedfastly with one accord in the temple.” Meetings for prayer were held daily. They were on fire with enthusiasm to make the gospel message known. What were the sources of this enthusiasm? What had transformed the followers of Jesus from a little band of fear-filled people into a band of cheerful, forceful, and enthusiastic messengers of God’s Kingdom?

1. The change was due to a new and wonderful faith which had come into their lives. They had come to believe that Jesus had risen from the dead and that all power had been given into the hand of their Lord. Logical-minded students of history are pretty well agreed that there is no explanation of the Early Church except in the fact of Christ’s resurrection.

2. The change was due, also, to a deep religious experience. We cannot explain fully the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, because we cannot understand it fully, but we may be sure that these early Christians

had come to know God in some new way and that this deeper religious experience manifested itself in changed lives and changed attributes of character.

3. The change was due in part to changed circumstances. They were no longer a handful but a great and growing company. There is a very real enthusiasm resulting from great and increasing numbers.

4. Their enthusiasm was due in part to their successes. They had undertaken things and accomplished things. Peter had preached a sermon which led to thousands of conversions. The disciples had dared to speak boldly in defense of the faith before the highest officials of the nation.

5. They were confident that God was with them. His presence had been felt in their lives and had been seen in the protective circumstances thrown about them.

#### SOME TRUTHS FROM THE LESSONS WE HAVE BEEN STUDYING

The enthusiasm of the early Christians helped them to win converts for Christianity. If they had gone about the preaching of the gospel in a half-hearted way, we must believe that the results would have been very different.

Enthusiasm for the cause of Christ helped the early Christians to settle their misunderstandings speedily and amicably. If they had not been so keenly interested in winning others to Christ, they would probably have had serious divisions over the distribution of funds to the needy.

In his great address Stephen showed that he was a Bible student. Enthusiasm is a necessary element in the personality of a great scholar.

If Philip had not been full of enthusiasm for Christianity, he would not have approached the chariot of the Ethiopian and talked with him about religious matters. Thus the introduction of Christianity into Africa might have been long delayed.

Simon, the sorcerer, was more anxious for power for himself than he was for the advancement of Christ's

Kingdom. He was a professed Christian, but he was not an enthusiastic Christian.

The Ethiopian is a good illustration of the enthusiastic searcher after truth. He lived in a land far away from Palestine, but he followed enthusiastically every clue which promised to lead him to the truth and at last he found it.

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Tell of the events which led to the appointment of the first deacons.
2. Give reasons for the rapid growth of the Early Church.
3. What were the charges against Stephen?
4. Give the substance of Stephen's arguments in his address before the council.
5. Tell the story of Dr. Shedd's last days.
6. In what way was the persecution of the Christians a help to the spread of Christianity?
7. Why was Samaria a city peculiarly responsive to the gospel?
8. Tell the story of Philip and the Ethiopian.
9. Why is enthusiasm apt to be a leading trait of character in people who accomplish great undertakings?
10. Tell what you can of the life of David Livingstone.

### BIBLE VERSES

Deut. 4:9; Josh. 1:7; 22:5; II Chron. 31:20, 21; Prov. 2:3-5; Eccl. 9:10; Matt. 22:37; II Cor. 8:7; I Tim. 4:15; II Peter 3:14.

### STUDY TOPICS

1. The Enthusiasm of Philip the disciple. John 1:45, 46.
2. How Jesus Tested the Enthusiasm of Those Whom He Chose as Disciples. Matt. 8:18-22.
3. Paul's Enthusiasm for the Cause of Christ. Phil. 3:7-14.



4. Shallow Enthusiasm Which Cannot Stand the Test of Time and Adversity. John 6:15, 60, 66.

5. Christ's Message to a Church Lacking in Enthusiasm. Rev. 3:15, 16.

6. Is a Lack of Enthusiasm for the Church a Common Failing of Christians?

7. How Can We Develop Greater Enthusiasm for the Church?

8. The Importance of Enthusiasm in School and College Athletics.

9. The Foundations of True and Lasting Religious Enthusiasm. (See introduction to this expressional lesson.)

10. Lack of Enthusiasm One of the Causes of the Failure of Judas. John 12:1-8.

#### PUTTING THE TRUTHS OF THE LESSON INTO PRACTICE

In order that the truths studied in this chapter may find expression in the lives of the pupils, the class should undertake some project of importance. As this project takes form and progress is made toward the accomplishment of the goals set, enthusiasm will almost inevitably result. Some undertakings for the class are suggested here, but it is well to ask for suggestions from the pupils, from the pastor of the church, from the Sunday-school superintendent, and others.

1. The furnishing and decorating of a room in a hospital.

2. The care of an orphan child in some foreign-mission land.

3. The equipment of a mission Sunday school in some frontier section of our own country.

4. Part or entire support of a Sunday-school missionary.

5. The increase of the Intermediate Department of the home church by one hundred per cent, or whatever increase seems best to be undertaken.

6. The bringing of a definite number of young people into the Church at the next Communion service.

## CHAPTER XV

### APOLLOS AND BARNABAS, TWO EARLY CONVERTS TO CHRISTIANITY

#### WEEK DAY SESSION

#### APOLLOS, A MAN OF GIANT INTELLECT. HOW THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION INCREASES THE POWER TO THINK

Acts 18:24-28; I Cor. 1:12; 3:4, 5, 22; 4:6; 16:12;  
Titus 3:13

In the book of Genesis we are told that "Jehovah God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." We are also told that "out of the ground Jehovah God formed every beast of the field, and every bird of the heavens." We are not told that God breathed into these latter the breath of life in such a way as to cause them to become living souls. The truth of the Bible statement is in entire harmony with what we know about mankind and about the lower forms of life. Man has a power to think, to feel, and to will, which is entirely lacking in other creatures. This is a part of what the Bible means when it speaks of men having been created in the image of God. The Christian religion has power to help people to become more like God, their Creator, in the power to think, to feel, and to will. In this chapter we are to see how this truth is illustrated in the lives of some of the first-century Christians.

**Alexandria, the Home City of Apollos.** Acts 18:24. In 332 B.C. Alexander the Great founded a city on the delta of the Nile. This city came to be called Alexandria after its founder. It became a great city, next in importance to Rome. It was for some centuries the intellectual capital of the world. Many Jews settled there and a certain part of the city was set apart for their residence. Learned men from Greece and Asia Minor came to Alexandria to live, and there they established some of the greatest schools and libraries of the





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STREET SCENE IN ANTIOCH

day. The Alexandrian Jews came into contact with the best learning of the Gentile nations. They thus became very different from the Jews who continued to live in Palestine and who refused to be influenced by the learning of other peoples. Holding to the great truths of their religion, they yet were able to learn much from the Greeks and others with whom they were neighbors in Alexandria. These Alexandrian Jews learned to speak the Greek language and in time practically ceased to speak the language which their forefathers had spoken in Palestine. They were thus led to translate, for the first time, the Old Testament into Greek.

**Education and Boyhood of Apollos.** Apollos was born in Alexandria and spent his boyhood and youth there. He was taught the Old Testament just as thoroughly as were the pupils in the schools of the rabbis in Jerusalem, but the teachers of Apollos were not so narrow in their views as the Jerusalem teachers were. Apollos may have been a pupil also in some Greek school of rhetoric, for we are told that he was not only "mighty in the scriptures" but was also "an eloquent man." Education gives the individual who secures it a power which he could not otherwise possess and young Apollos, during these school days in Alexandria, was laying up power for the life work to which he was to be called in the providence of God.

**Apollos Finds New Light in the Teachings of John the Baptist.** Acts 18:25. It was fortunate for Apollos that he had not received the narrow and prejudiced type of religious instruction such as was given by the rabbis of Jerusalem. He had a mind which was open to new truths. Some rumors of John the Baptist had reached Alexandria and his teachings were discussed by the Alexandrian Jews. John's emphasis on a spiritual Kingdom, and his proclamation that the Messiah should be a "Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world," found a response in the hearts of some of the Alexandrian Jews. Apollos had never seen John. He probably knew little of what John had taught, but that little seemed to Apollos to be a better light than he had yet found and he followed it. Possibly some rumors

concerning Jesus and his teachings had likewise reached Alexandria by this time and Apollos may have thus caught a little glimpse of "the true light, even the light which lighteth every man, coming into the world."

**Apollos Learns More About Jesus.** Acts 18:26-28. Apollos was not selfish in his search after the truth. As soon as he was sure of some new and helpful fact of the spiritual life, he went out and enthusiastically told others about it. He came to Ephesus and preached there. Now there were in Ephesus two Jewish people who had become Christians. These two, Aquila and his wife Priscilla, heard Apollos preach. They realized that while Apollos spoke the truth, he did not yet know much about the life and the teachings of Jesus. So they took him and instructed him in the Christian religion. Apollos gladly listened to this information and then went forth still better equipped for his work. He crossed the sea to Achaia, or Greece, where his learning would make him especially valuable as a missionary in the task of winning the keenly intellectual Greeks to the religion of Jesus.

**A Coworker with Paul.** Apollos came to Corinth where Paul had preached before him. Paul was in hearty sympathy with the work done by Apollos, but some of the Corinthians seem to have failed to realize that Paul and Apollos were preaching the same religion and the same Saviour. They began to divide into factions. Some said they were followers of Paul; others said they were followers of Apollos; still others claimed to be followers of others of the disciples. Paul wrote to the church at Corinth to correct these notions. He told them that while he had planted the Christian faith in Corinth and Apollos had watered it, God was the one who had given the increase. I Cor. 3:4, 5.

Apollos probably gave his life to the work of preaching the Christian religion. Many years after he had been in Corinth we hear of him in the island of Crete. In writing to Titus who was in charge of the missionary work in Crete, Paul urges Titus to "set forward Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their journey diligently, that nothing be wanting unto them," Titus 3:13.

**The Epistle to the Hebrews.** Many Bible students believe that the Epistle to the Hebrews was written by Apollos. There is a great deal of evidence for such a conclusion. Its author must have been a scholarly man. The language is that of a learned and eloquent writer. The author of the epistle was perfectly familiar with the Old Testament and the Jewish methods of interpreting it, and yet there are evidences of some widening influence such as the schools of Alexandria are known to have given. Above all, the author has found in the life and teachings of Jesus the fulfillment and the explanation of the Old Testament and the religion of the Jews. Whether the author was Apollos or some other convert from Judaism, we can see in this wonderful letter the power of the Christian religion to increase the ability of the human mind to think thoughts that are wide and deep. The author had gained an understanding of the meaning of history and of life such as a knowledge of Jesus as the Christ alone can give.

#### HOW THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION INCREASES THE POWER TO THINK

We have seen that some person of giant intellect, possibly Apollos, wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews, and that the powers of mind which the author possessed, were to a large extent, the result of the Christian religion. The fact that the greatest thinkers of our day are found among the peoples of Christian nations needs no argument. Many of the greatest minds have realized that they owed their triumphs in the intellectual world to religion. Kepler, the great astronomer, said that he had only thought God's thoughts after him. Samuel F. B. Morse insisted that the first telegram sent over the wires should be, "What hath God wrought!" A great American statesman, who understood better than almost any other man of his day the principles of just government said, "Jesus is the best light we have in all matters of government."

How does the Christian religion increase the power to think? We may not be able to answer this question fully, for it is probable that no one knows all the reasons

why a Christian is apt to think more clearly and more deeply and more accurately than a person of equal natural ability who is not a Christian. There are several reasons, however, which are fairly plain and we shall consider a few of these.

**The Christian religion frees the mind of man from hampering superstitions.** Some of the tribes of Africa believe that if a baby cuts an upper tooth before it cuts a lower tooth, the father of the child will surely die within a few hours after the baby's tooth appears. Do you think people can think accurately on any subject when their minds are full of thousands of such notions as this? The religion of Jesus teaches us that our lives and fortunes do not depend upon any such chance occurrences as that which we have mentioned. It teaches the fatherhood of God—that the Creator knows all about us and watches over us, that not even a sparrow falls to the ground without the notice of God.

**The Christian religion gives that self-control necessary to deep and continuous thinking.** Jesus said, "Every one that committeth sin is the bondservant of sin." If a man is to think effectively, he must be master of himself. He must not allow a fit of anger to come in and disturb his thought, no matter how great the annoyance may be. A person who cannot control his passions is not apt to have the ability to control his thoughts so as to hold his mind steadily and persistently on the search after truth.

**The Christian religion leads to right habits of life which preserve the strength of the body and thus give the mind an opportunity to reach its best development.** It has been shown that almost all boys who develop bad physical habits, such as smoking cigarettes, soon fall behind their classes in school. By injuring their bodies they inevitably injure their minds. The Christian religion says to all what Paul said to his young friend, Timothy, "Keep thyself pure."

**The Christian religion makes profound thought possible by adding true faith to our intellectual equipment.** There are certain great truths which rest on faith rather than on any actual demonstration which can be made



of their truth. Among these truths are the immortality of the soul, the reality of prayer, and the existence of God. The person who lacks faith and who says that he cannot believe the things we have mentioned, because they cannot be proved with absolute conclusiveness, can never think very deeply on most of the great problems of existence.

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## SUNDAY SESSION

BARNABAS, THE BIG-HEARTED. HOW THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION INCREASES THE POWER TO FEEL

Acts 4:36, 37; 9:26-30; 11:19-30; 13:1-3; 15:36-41

Among the first converts to Christianity was a man named Joseph. He was a Jew, a member of the tribe of Levi, but he had been born in the island of Cyprus. Joseph owned a field somewhere in the neighborhood of Jerusalem, so he must have become a resident of Palestine at the time of his conversion. One of the first acts of Joseph after he became a Christian was to go and sell his land and bring the money he had received for it to the disciples, to be used by them for the care of any who might be in need. Money has been called "the acid test" of our religion and by this act Joseph gave good evidence that his conversion was genuine. The disciples soon found that this new convert was a person of unselfish and kindly disposition. He was always thinking of the comfort of other people and was so sympathetic toward those in trouble that the disciples changed his name to Barnabas which means "son of consolation."

**Generous in His Friendships.** Acts 9:26-30. Some time after his conversion to Christianity, Paul came to Jerusalem where he had so bitterly persecuted the followers of Jesus. It is not strange that the Jerusalem Christians were afraid and suspicious of Paul. They could not believe that he was now a disciple of Jesus. It is fortunate that Barnabas was then in Jerusalem. His kindly spirit led him to have confidence in Paul.

Barnabas was the first to believe that Saul the persecutor had become Paul the apostle. Barnabas took Paul to the apostles and told them of the wonderful conversion which Paul had experienced on the road to Damascus and how he had preached boldly in the name of Jesus in the city where he had planned to persecute the Christians. It was the fine ability of Barnabas to feel sympathy with all classes of people which made him so useful to Paul and to the Church at this time.

**Yielding the Place of Leadership to His Friend.** Acts 11:19-26. The Christians were scattered far and wide by the persecution which arose after the death of Stephen. Some of them traveled to Phœnicia on the Mediterranean coast and some reached the island of Cyprus. Everywhere these fugitives went, they preached the gospel of Jesus. At first they preached to Jews only, but there were certain Christians who went to Antioch and who began to preach to Greeks. They found that the Greeks were quite as ready as the Jews to become followers of Jesus. When the church in Jerusalem heard of the encouraging growth of the Christian religion in Antioch, they sent Barnabas there. Barnabas saw the great opportunity in Antioch for the establishment of a great Christian church. If he had been a selfish man, he would probably have wished to be the leader of the movement in Antioch and thus gain for himself the honor of having built up a strong and important church. But Barnabas was not that kind of man; he was not thinking of his own honor and the prominence he might gain. He thought he knew of a man who was just the kind of leader they needed in Antioch, so he went to Tarsus and brought Paul back with him. Paul had aroused the hatred of the Jerusalem Jews and had gone away to Tarsus, his native city, some time before. If it had not been for Barnabas, Paul might have labored on in obscurity at Tarsus until the end of his life. Antioch was the kind of opportunity Paul needed to develop his powers and to put him in touch with the open door to a vast missionary enterprise. The New Testament pays this splendid tribute to Barnabas and we feel that he deserved it; "he was a good man, and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith."

**A First-Century Philanthropist.** Acts 11:27-30. About this time a great famine came to the countries of the then known world. The people of Judea, especially those living in Jerusalem, were naturally the first to feel the effects of this famine, because the land of Judea is barren and rocky and great numbers of the people are never far from starvation. The church at Antioch had now grown to be a great church. The members of the Antioch church "determined to send relief unto the brethren that dwelt in Judæa." We have grown familiar with relief measures in times of famine and other disasters, but in the first century the sending of relief to strangers in a distant city was something quite new. The world had never witnessed anything of the kind before when the Christians in Antioch gave all that they were able to give to help the poor of Judea in a time of famine. Paul and Barnabas were appointed to carry the gifts of the Antioch church to the elders of the church in Jerusalem, and they had doubtless been the leaders in planning this act of Christian helpfulness.

**Giving a Young Man Another Trial.** Acts 15:36-41. We have seen in a preceding lesson how Barnabas and Paul differed about taking John Mark with them on their second missionary journey. Paul in his emphatic and self-confident way was unalterably opposed to taking Mark with them. Barnabas in his kindness of soul wished to give Mark another chance. He, as well as Paul, could be firm when he was sure that he was in the right. The controversy ended in the separation of Paul and Barnabas, but Mark was saved to the cause of the Kingdom. It is good to know that this difference of opinion did not lead to any permanent estrangement between Paul and Barnabas. In his letters Paul speaks repeatedly of Barnabas and always in friendly terms.

#### HOW THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION INCREASES THE POWER TO FEEL

The Christian religion increases a person's power to feel quite as truly as it increases a person's power to think. Great philanthropies, such as hospitals, orphans' homes, asylums for the insane, and relief organizations

for the help of those who are the victims of flood or famine or fire, are to be found only in Christian countries. This is because the Christian religion has increased people's power to feel sympathy for those in distress. Music and art are to-day at their best in Christian lands because the Christian religion has increased people's power to appreciate things that are sublime and beautiful. It is certain that a person who is a Christian finds more joy and satisfaction in life than that same person could possibly experience without becoming a follower of Jesus.

But why is this so, and how does the Christian religion increase a person's power to feel? Primarily by changing the person rather than by changing the circumstances surrounding the person, by making the person "a new creature" in Christ rather than by giving him a few things in addition to those already possessed. The Christian religion makes people more sympathetic by driving out selfishness, the great foe of sympathy. It makes people more truly happy than they could otherwise be, because it leads to forms of happiness that are deeper than they could otherwise know. Christianity means the service of our fellow men. It means that we live to make others happy, but it is a law of our natures that in giving happiness to others we gain true and lasting happiness for ourselves. The Christian religion brings us closer fellowship with God than we could otherwise attain and in this fellowship is our deepest joy and our most lasting satisfaction. Many centuries ago a great man of the Church said, "Our souls, O God, were made for thyself, and they are restless until they find rest in thee."

#### THE LESSON PRAYER

We thank thee, our Father, for the heroic men and women of the Early Church and the lessons which we learn from their lives. We would be like them in our fidelity to thee and in our desire to build thy Kingdom in the world. We would find our greatest joys in serving thee and helping our fellow men. Bless our church school we pray thee. Teach us to be attentive to the

lessons as they are taught by our teachers. Guide us into ways of service so that we may not only learn these lessons of truth but live them and make them a part of ourselves. We ask in the name of Jesus, thy Son. Amen.

### THE LESSON HYMN

“O Still in Accents Sweet and Strong.” “Studies of Familiar Hymns,” page 137.

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## EXPRESSIONAL SESSION

### FULL-GROWN CHRISTIANS

Eph. 4:13-15

We have seen how the Christian religion increases the power to think and the power to feel. The influence of the Christian religion is even greater over the power to will than it is over the intellect and the feelings. The power to will that which is just and good and to hold unfalteringly to right decisions is one of the greatest blessings that the Christian religion brings to an individual. The Bible contains many illustrations of this truth. It shows us many people who willed to do right but whose wills were too feeble to carry out their good resolutions. Pilate is an illustration of this weakness. He wished to release Jesus, for he knew that he was innocent. In the accounts of the trial of Jesus, we see the gradual giving away of the weak will of Pilate before the clamor of the Jews.

At first Pilate declared Jesus not guilty and proposed to set the prisoner free. Then he heard that Herod was in Jerusalem and thought to escape the responsibility of his office by shifting the case to Herod. Next he proposed that Jesus be condemned and set free as a pardoned criminal. Then he took Jesus and scourged him, hoping that the Jews might be satisfied. At last he yielded and sent Jesus to be crucified. What a shameful exhibition of weakness! Yet all who indulge in sin are bringing on just such weakness of will in so far as the willing of right things is concerned.

Peter is an illustration of a weak will made strong through the religion of Jesus. He thought that he had a strong will and perhaps he did in some things. He boastfully proclaimed that he would never forsake Jesus, even if he had to die with him, but a little later he denied his Lord when a girl said to him, "Thou also wast with Jesus the Galilæan." But after the resurrection of Jesus, Peter came to possess the indomitable will of a true follower of the Christ. Imprisonment and scourging and threats of death could not overcome his determination to preach the gospel of Jesus.

We have seen that the Christian religion helps people to reach their best development. This is what Paul meant when he spoke about those to whom he wrote becoming full-grown men and about their attaining unto the "measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." Without religion none can become spiritually full-grown. They become spiritual dwarfs; they are crippled in their souls.

#### SOME TRUTHS FROM THE LESSONS WE HAVE BEEN STUDYING

Apollos became full-grown intellectually after he learned about the life and teachings of Jesus and became an enthusiastic follower of the Christ.

Apollos was a humble man. He did not feel that he knew everything even if he had been educated in the intellectual capital of the world. He was willing to learn from two Jewish strangers who had probably not had half so much education as he had enjoyed.

Jesus once told a young man to sell all his property and give the money which he received from this sale to the poor. The young man went away sorrowful. Barnabas and many of the other Christians of the Early Church did as much as Jesus asked the young man to do and they did it of their own choice. These early Christians had a deep sympathy with the poor, whereas the rich young man had not.

Christianity develops friendship which is both wide and deep. It is the foe of little cliques and factions and the ally of world-wide brotherhood.

Famine relief and like philanthropic movements had their beginning in the Christian Church because the religion of Jesus had enlarged the sympathies of those who had become followers of the Christ.

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What does the Bible mean when it says that man was made in the image of God?
2. Tell what you can of Alexandria, the native city of Apollos.
3. Why was Apollos interested in the teachings of John the Baptist?
4. How did Apollos come to know about the life and teachings of Jesus?
5. Name some of the ways in which the Christian religion helps an individual to develop the power to think.
6. Why did Barnabas sell his land and give the money to the disciples?
7. Show how the Christian religion affects a person's power to feel sympathy.
8. Name some incidents in the life of Barnabas which show that he was a true friend.
9. Show how Pilate's weak will yielded to the clamor of the Jews.
10. Show how the will of Peter grew after the resurrection of Jesus.

### BIBLE VERSES

Gen. 17:1, 2; Deut. 18:13; Prov. 4:18; Matt. 5:48; Mark 4:26-29; Col. 1:28; 2:2, 3; Heb. 5:12-14; I Peter 2:2; II Peter 3:18.

### STUDY TOPICS

1. A Man Who Grew Strong Under Persecution. John, ch. 9. (Note how the man born blind became more and more outspoken in his defense of Jesus.)
2. A King Who Sulked Like a Spoiled Child. I Kings 21:1-4.

3. The Perfect Sympathy of Jesus. See Matt. 9:36; 15:32; 20:34; et cetera.

4. The Perfect Self-Control and Will Power of Jesus. See Matt. 4:1-11; 21:12-17; John 18:22-24; et cetera.

5. What Christians Have Done for China in Times of Famine.

6. The Work of the Near East Relief.

7. Why Instruction in Christianity Is a Necessary Part of Education.

8. Great Paintings Which Owe Their Existence to the Christian Religion. (See "The Story of the Masterpieces," by Stuart, or some similar book.)

9. The Manhood of the Master. (Let several pupils select chapters from Dr. Fosdick's book on this theme and report to the class.)

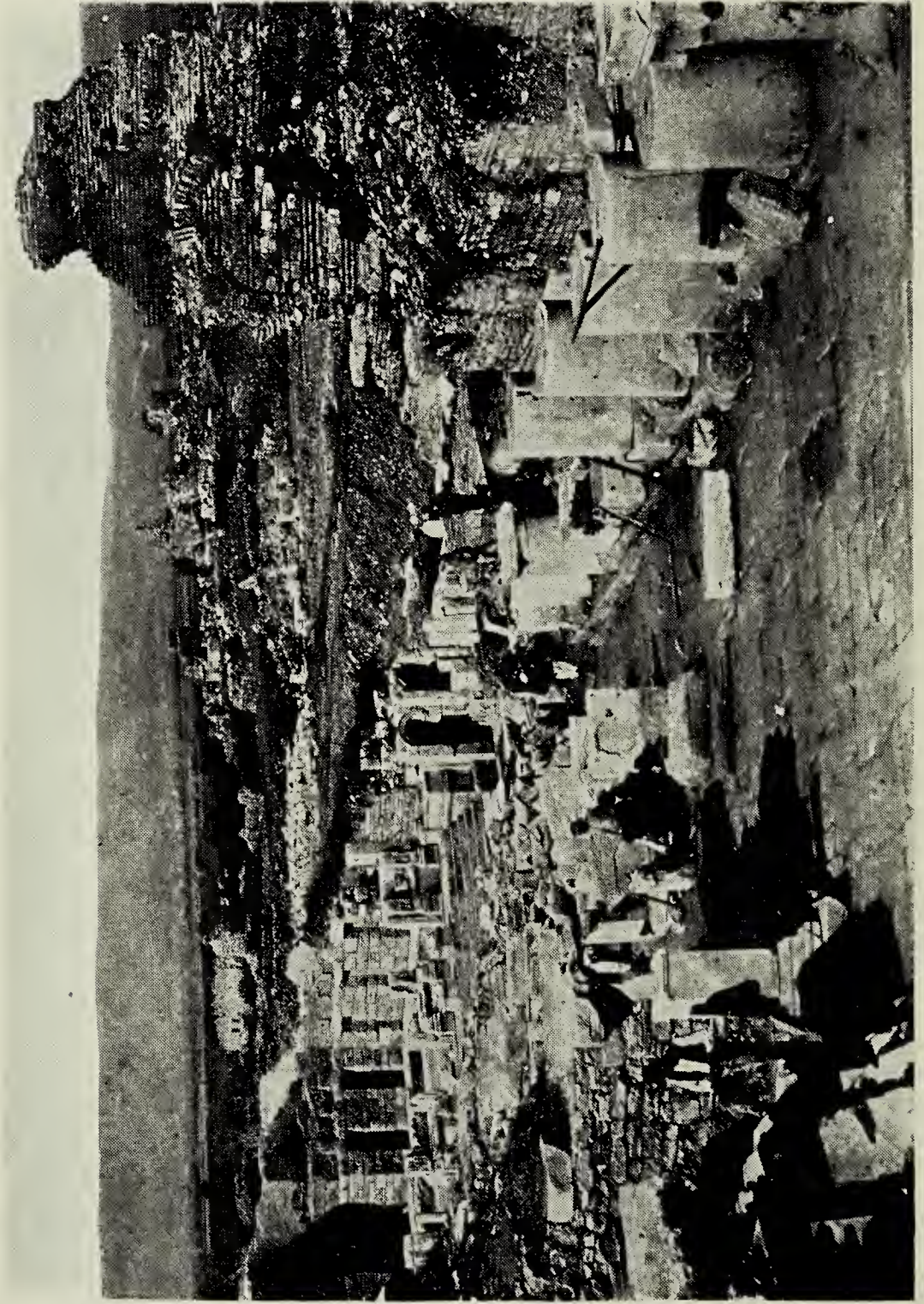
10. How the Christian Religion Makes for Perfection of Character.

#### PUTTING THE TRUTHS OF THE LESSON INTO PRACTICE

It is one of the tragedies of the modern Church that so many who become its members never make any noticeable growth in the Christian life. They fail to advance "in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men." This failure is due in part to the fact that the Church has a faulty and inadequate educational program. Let the pupils put in practice the truths they have studied in this lesson. Call for suggestions from pupils as to how this can be done and let them tell how these truths ought to affect their lives in the home and in the community. If the friendships of some of the pupils are narrow and exclusive, some social activities in which the whole class, with invited guests from outside the class, may participate, would be a good form of expressional activity. Coöperation with the Red Cross and other relief agencies may be found helpful.







Gilliams' Service

RUINS OF EPHEBUS

## CHAPTER XVI

### TWO YOUNG MEN WHO WERE HELPERS OF PAUL

#### WEEK DAY SESSION

TITUS, A YOUNG MAN WHO WAS FOUND TO BE FAITHFUL IN PLACES OF RESPONSIBILITY

Gal. 2:1-3; II Cor. 2:12, 13; 7:5-7; 8:6, 7; 16; 12:18;  
Titus 1:1-16

As time passed and the disciples of Jesus, together with others who had known him in the flesh, began to leave the earthly Church to be with their Lord, leaders like Paul and John realized more and more the necessity for training young men and women who should take up the great task which they must soon lay down. It was for this reason that John wrote his First Epistle and in it penned the words, "I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the evil one." Paul gathered about him certain young men who became his helpers. Among these helpers of Paul were Titus and Timothy, the two young men who are to be the objects of our study in this chapter.

**A Convert from Paganism.** Gal. 2:1-3. Titus was a Gentile. It is thought that his early home was in Antioch and that Paul first met him there during the years when the Antioch church was being built up under the leadership of Paul and Barnabas. Such Christians as Luke and Titus were an object lesson to those who had been reared as members of the Jewish faith and had later become Christians. They saw in these converted Gentiles the proof that God is no respecter of persons and that the religion of Jesus is able to change the lives of all who come to God believing in his Son.

**One of Paul's Spiritual Children.** Titus 1:1-4. It is likely that Titus was converted under the preaching of

Paul for in his letter to Titus Paul calls him "my true child after a common faith." These spiritual children were a great source of joy and comfort to Paul and to the others who in the first century preached the gospel of Jesus and won converts for the Kingdom. When Paul was an old man and in prison, he wrote to the Christians of Philippi calling them "my brethren beloved and longed for, my joy and crown." John wrote to a friend, who had probably been converted under his influence, saying, "Greater joy have I none than this, to hear of my children walking in the truth," III John 4.

**Titus in the School of Paul.** For some years young Titus was the helper and traveling companion of Paul. These were years of preparation, years when Titus was practically in school, for there is no greater school than that which consists of a great and enthusiastic teacher and leader together with the pupils of such a leader. Titus heard Paul preach and saw how unceasingly he labored, and little by little the pupil took on the habits of his teacher.

Titus accompanied Paul and Barnabas when they went from Antioch to Jerusalem to hold a conference with the disciples and the elders of the Jerusalem church on the conditions under which Gentile converts should be admitted to the Christian fellowship. It was well for Titus that he had these years of training under a great leader, for the time came when he was given tasks of much importance.

**Sent to Do an Important and Delicate Task.** II Cor. 2:12, 13; 7:5-7; 8:6, 7, 16; 12:18. Paul preached for several months in Corinth and gathered together a large number of Christians there. Some time after leaving Corinth he learned that all was not well in the newly organized church in that city. Although the people who were members of the Christian church in Corinth had broken away from idolatry, they did not find it easy to throw off the habits of life which years of pagan living had fastened upon them. They became divided among rival leaders. Some of them fell back into the pagan immoralities which they had renounced upon becoming Christians. They had a great deal of disputing concerning what a Christian might and might not do. Some

of them became bitter enemies and were soon embroiled in law suits; Christian against Christian, in the public courts. It looked as if the Christian church of Corinth would surely go to pieces and as if the work at which Paul had labored so diligently would be brought to nought.

Paul could not at this time go to Corinth himself so he looked about for a suitable person to send in his place. He chose his young friend, Titus. It was an important and delicate task. It promised likewise to be unpleasant, for the straightening out of such tangles is apt to stir up a good deal of resentment against the person who undertakes to act as peacemaker.

Titus had learned, however, to be patient, frank, and persevering. He succeeded admirably. The Corinthian church was saved and started on a new era of growth. Titus won the hearts of the Corinthian Christians and they loaded him with gifts for himself and for his leader, Paul. Everyone was made glad by the work of Titus. The Corinthian Christians were glad to be once more at peace among themselves. Paul was glad because a great worry was rolled away. Titus himself was glad because he had done good and made others happy.

**Made Superintendent in the Island of Crete.** Titus 1:5-16. In due time Titus became overseer of the Christian forces in the island of Crete. His task was to organize churches, select suitable men to become elders, and have general oversight of the preaching of the gospel in the island. This was a task of great difficulty, for much depended on the selection of the right kind of men to lead the newly organized churches. The Cretans who had become Christians found it just as hard as the Corinthians had found it to break away entirely from pagan ideas and habits. They needed a great deal of teaching and a great deal of personal and helpful advice. It is a great compliment to Titus that Paul chose him for this important and difficult task.

**With Paul in Rome.** We do not know much about the last years of the life of Titus. His stay in Crete was not permanent, however, for we know from Paul's second letter to Timothy that Titus was with Paul shortly before the letter was written. We may well believe that

Titus remained a faithful and diligent preacher of the gospel and missionary to the Gentiles until the end of his life. As a young man he was not found wanting in places of difficulty and responsibility, and we may rest assured that having known the way of purity and service in his youth he did not depart from it when he was old.

### OUTGOING MISSIONARIES OF THE CROSS

The work which Paul and John and others of the disciples of the Early Church did in recruiting young people for the work of the Church must go on from century to century. When the young life of any generation responds loyally to the call for Christian service, the cause of Christ prospers. When the young life of any generation is unresponsive to the call of Christian service, the cause of Christ languishes.

It is the custom of some of the denominations in our country to hold every year a conference for its missionaries who are going out to the foreign field for the first time. At a recent meeting of this kind many recruits had come together for prayer and conference before setting forth for the widely scattered portions of the earth to which they had been assigned. Before the close of the meeting the newly appointed missionaries were asked to rise and express in a brief statement their reasons for going out to the foreign field. Some of these statements are as follows:

"I have not been able to find a reason satisfactory to my conscience why I should not go."

"I go because the medical profession in the United States is crowded, and there is great need for physicians in the foreign field."

"Jesus Christ has so taken possession of my heart and soul and strength and mind that it is my highest duty and joy to follow his injunction to go and carry his gospel of salvation to God's children over there who have not seen the light of his countenance and do not know him."

"I go because the fields are white unto the harvest and the laborers few."

"I go because our Master died that all might have salvation and he has called me to carry the message."

“I am going as a missionary because I was not ‘called’ to stay at home.”

“I go to China because I realize, in part, the wonderful opportunity and the pressing need for workers. I should feel like a coward if I did not respond.”

“My great desire is to take, teach, and live the gospel of Christ where those who sit in darkness may see the light of the world as it has been revealed to me.”

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## SUNDAY SESSION

### TIMOTHY, ANOTHER OF PAUL'S SPIRITUAL CHILDREN

Acts 16:1-15; II Tim. 1:1-14; 4:6-18

So far as we know Paul had no children of his own. He had, however, many whom he called his children, because they had been converted under his influence and teaching. As we have seen, Titus was one of these spiritual children of Paul. An even closer bond of fellowship seems to have existed between Paul and Timothy than existed between Paul and Titus. Perhaps this was due to the fact that Timothy was a mere boy when Paul first came to know him. Jesus once told his disciples that anyone who should give up houses, or brethren, or sisters, or mother, or father, or children, or lands, for his sake and the gospel's sake should receive a hundredfold now and in the world to come eternal life. Paul had given up much to become a follower of Jesus, but as we read his life story we come to see how the promise of Jesus was fulfilled. He had thousands of brethren. He had spiritual children who loved him and were glad to obey him. In writing to the Romans, Paul says, “Salute Rufus the chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine.” Paul evidently had brethren, fathers, mothers, and spiritual children scattered all over the vast territory where he had labored for the Kingdom.

**A Household Conversion at Lystra.** There were a good many people converted to Christianity in the city of Lystra when Paul visited that place on his first mis-

sionary journey. Among the number were a Jewish woman named Eunice and her mother, Lois. Timothy was the son of Eunice, but his father was a Greek. Timothy may have been quite a young boy at the time, but it is probable that his conversion to Christianity dates from this first visit of Paul. Indeed, it is likely that the whole family of Eunice became Christians at this time. Household conversions were common in the ministry of Paul. Timothy had been brought up in a godly home. From his babyhood he had been taught the great lessons of the Old Testament by his mother, Eunice, and his grandmother, Lois. Eunice and her mother were truly religious and lived up to the light that they had. This is why they were ready to accept the better light of the gospel as soon as they heard the message from the lips of Paul.

**Paul Chooses Timothy as His Helper.** Acts 16:1-10. When Paul reached Lystra on his second missionary journey, he found that Timothy whom he had known as a boy on his first journey had grown into young manhood. Timothy, though yet hardly more than a boy, had become well known among the Christians not only of his home town but in the neighboring city of Iconium. Timothy was "well reported of by the brethren." Paul was so well pleased with Timothy that he invited him to become a member of the missionary party. Timothy accepted the invitation and for many years he was intimately associated with the great apostle.

**Carrying the Gospel Into Europe.** Acts 16:11-15. Timothy went with Paul down to the seacoast at Troas; from thence they set sail for the countries lying to the westward of that part of the Mediterranean sea. They landed at Philippi as the first missionaries to Europe, a continent which then lay in pagan darkness. Timothy accompanied Paul to Thessalonica and Berea, but he and Silas remained in Berea while Paul went on to Athens. Later we hear of Paul sending Timothy to Corinth on a mission similar to that on which he sent Titus. Timothy was with Paul during his somewhat prolonged labors in Ephesus. He was likewise with the apostle during his first imprisonment in Rome.



**In Charge of the Work in Ephesus.** As Paul grew older and the calls upon his time and strength multiplied, he came to depend more and more upon his faithful deputy, Timothy. He placed Timothy in charge of the work in the great city of Ephesus. It was a very important post. Ephesus was a great center of trade and of learning. From it important highways radiated to all parts of Asia Minor. Paul planted his churches with the skill of a great general who wisely chooses his objectives. He knew that this strategic point must be strongly manned and he chose Timothy for the task. It was a difficult task. The churches must be more thoroughly organized. Officers must be selected. Pagan notions which continually tended to creep in must be combated. The people must be taught what is meant really to be followers of Jesus.

It was to help and encourage Timothy in this great task that Paul wrote to him the letter which we have come to call the First Epistle to Timothy. It is full of wholesome advice and wise counsel. The apostle speaks frankly to his helper, but the tender and fatherly love of Paul for his spiritual child is manifest in nearly every line. He calls Timothy his "true child in faith."

**Imprisoned and Lonely the Apostle Yearns for the Company of His Child.** II Tim. 4:6-18. In his dungeon, with only Luke with him, Paul longed to see once more the one whom he had come to call, "my beloved and faithful child in the Lord." He knew that the time of his departure was at hand and he urges Timothy to "give diligence to come shortly." He opens his heart to his friend, telling him of all that has happened to him. It is a wonderful letter, full of courageous faith and flashing with the fire of an enthusiasm which the hardships of the dungeon, the infirmities of age, and the certainty of approaching death could not quench. Paul knew that he would never preach again, but he could urge Timothy to do his best to proclaim the gospel which they both loved. He writes therefore to Timothy, saying, "I charge thee in the sight of God, and of Christ Jesus, who shall judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: preach the word; be

urgent in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching."

We have reason to believe that Timothy reached Paul before Paul was put to death by Nero and that he shared for a time the imprisonment of the apostle. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews says near the close of the letter, "Know ye that our brother Timothy hath been set at liberty." This may refer to the time of Timothy's imprisonment with Paul just before the death of the latter, but of this we cannot be sure.

### SIN PAO, A CRIPPLED KOREAN BOY

Twenty-five miles from the city of Tai-ku in Korea is the little village of Sun Pat. In this village there lived a few years ago a little crippled Korean boy named Sin Pao. His legs were so twisted that he had never walked half a mile in his life. He spent his days sitting on the earthen floor of his father's hut, making nets such as the Koreans of that time used in dressing their hair. Despite his heavy handicap, Sin Pao was ambitious. Little by little he learned the Korean characters and thus became able to read, even though he had no teacher to help him.

After a while there drifted into the hands of this crippled Korean boy a little Christian tract called "The Road to True Blessing." He read it again and again, for it seemed to contain that for which his starved soul was hungering. He began to tell others about the things the book contained, and some of them became interested. Finally he said to his neighbors and relatives, "All followers of the Jesus' teaching rest on the Lord's day and meet together; we, too, must have a meeting on the Lord's day." He had never seen a church or been in a Christian service, but he was determined that they should have a Christian church in his village. Learning that there were Christian believers in Tai-ku, he determined to go there that he might find out what the Christians did in their meetings on the Lord's day. But Tai-ku was twenty-five miles away. By working hard he managed to get a little money and hired a coolie to carry him to Tai-ku. These coolies carry heavy sacks of rice on their backs in a kind of saddle called a *ji-gi*. One of

them consented to carry Sin Pao instead of the sack of rice if he would pay him the wages he usually received for carrying the sack of grain.

Fortunately for Sin Pao, he reached Tai-ku just as a great men's Bible class was holding a series of meetings. He eagerly drank in the information concerning the Bible, concerning prayer, and the preaching of the gospel in the meetings of the Christians. And so it came to pass that after Sin Pao's return to his native village, he organized a Christian church. It is now quite a strong organization and Sin Pao finds his greatest joy in conducting the services on the Lord's day. When the missionaries occasionally visit Sun Pat, they find the people holding steadfastly to their faith and desiring to know more concerning the new way of life upon which they have entered. Among them all Sin Pao is the most eager to learn more concerning the Christian faith and the Book which has become a light upon his pathway of life.

#### THE LESSON PRAYER

Teach us, our Father in heaven, to appreciate the blessings which we enjoy in our land of liberty and opportunity. When we learn of those who live in other lands where the light of the Christian religion has just begun to shine, and when we see the zeal with which they seize every opportunity to learn more of the way of life, it makes us know that we lack appreciation and thankfulness. Raise up missionaries, we pray thee, to carry the gospel of Jesus to those who are hungering and thirsting after righteousness, that they may be filled. Forgive us if we have spent our money selfishly and thoughtlessly instead of using as much of it as we could for this great work. We ask these blessings for the sake of Jesus, thy Son. Amen.

#### THE LESSON HYMN

"From Greenland's Icy Mountains." "Studies of Familiar Hymns," page 63.

## EXPRESSIONAL SESSION

### THE CALL OF THE FOREIGN MISSION FIELD

Acts 16:6-15

Our Scripture lesson tells how the gospel came to be carried into Europe. Paul had just chosen Timothy as his helper. Leaving Lystra, the boyhood home of Timothy, they struck out on their westward journey. Turning north, they planned to enter Bithynia, as the country lying just south of the Black Sea was called at that time. But God in some way made it known to Paul that he was not to enter this region just yet. So they went on, seeking the field of labor toward which God was leading them. They kept right on without stopping to preach, for they were sure that they had not yet come to the appointed place of labor. In due time they reached the sea at Troas. Across the sea lay the land of Macedonia, a part of Europe. In a vision of the night Paul saw a man of Macedonia standing and beseeching him, and saying, "Come over into Macedonia, and help us." Paul and Timothy believed that this was God's call to them to go into Macedonia and preach the gospel there. It was in this way that the first missionaries set foot on the soil of the European continent.

The work to which God called Paul and Timothy and Titus is not yet finished. God is still calling people, young people especially, to take up the great task which the Christians of the first century began so well. More people are hearing and heeding this call to-day than in any other century of the Church's history, but still the number is not sufficient to meet the needs. The fields are white to harvest, the harvest is likewise abundant, but the laborers are few. Not only are more volunteers needed, but there is need for money to send out and equip those who have offered themselves.

#### SOME TRUTHS FROM THE LESSONS WE HAVE BEEN STUDYING

If young people like Timothy and Titus had not offered themselves for Christian service, and had not gone through a period of preparation for their tasks, the

Christian Church would have gradually disappeared from the earth as the disciples passed away.

Timothy was half a Gentile and Titus was entirely of Gentile parentage, but they proved to be invaluable aids to the building up of the Christian Church. Many converts from paganism in the foreign-mission fields develop into admirable Christian characters.

Both Titus and Timothy underwent a long period of preparation for the life work to which God had called them. God honors education by making it an instrument of great importance in his program of human redemption.

Timothy was early fitted for large service because he had a godly mother and there was a religious atmosphere in his home.

Titus and Timothy lived in an age when pleasure-seeking was the life goal of most young people. The pleasure seekers of that century have disappeared without leaving a trace on the history of the race. These two young men who became Christian missionaries have made their influence felt through all the history of the Christian Church.

#### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. In what way were converted Gentiles like Titus and Luke an object lesson to Christians who had been members of the Jewish Church?

2. Why was Paul especially interested in Titus and Timothy?

3. Tell of the task to which Titus was assigned by Paul.

4. Give some reasons why missionaries go to the foreign field.

5. Are household conversions possible in our day?

6. What spiritual advantage had Timothy enjoyed before he became Paul's helper?

7. Tell something of the contents of Paul's first letter to Timothy.

8. Under what circumstances did Paul write his second letter to Timothy?

9. Tell the story of Sin Pao, the Korean cripple.

## BIBLE VERSES

Psalm 67; Isa. 11:9; 60:1-3; Jonah 1:1-3; Matt. 26:13; 28:18-20; Luke 2:29-32; Acts 1:8; 10:34, 35; 13:1-3.

## STUDY TOPICS

1. Raymond Lull, a Knight of a New Crusade.
2. James Chalmers, a Boy Who Was Nobly Venturesome.
3. Mackay of Uganda.
4. Mary Slessor, a Woman Who Conquered Cannibals.
5. Archibald Forder, the Friend of the Arab.

(Material for all the above may be found in "The Book of Missionary Heroes," by Basil Matthews. This book is for sale by the Presbyterian bookstores and should be in the hands of those who are teaching this course. The book may be loaned to pupils who have been assigned the above topics.)

6. Modern Missions in India.
7. Modern Missions in China.
8. Presbyterian Mission Work Among the Indians.
9. Mission Work in South America.
10. Presbyterian Mission Work in Africa.

(Information for all the topics listed, with the exception of Number 8 may be secured from the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York City. Information concerning the Indian work may be secured from the Board of Home Missions at the same address.)

## PUTTING THE TRUTHS OF THE LESSON INTO PRACTICE

Choose some mission station or individual missionary toward whose support the class is to contribute. Have the class secretary write to the chosen station or missionary and secure letters and photographs. Ask some member of the class to find out about the Student Volunteer Movement and report to the class. Collect books

and papers to be sent to mission schools. Have the class conduct a missionary service in the church Sunday morning or Sunday evening. Some of the stories and topics suggested above could be repeated in this service in the church.

## CHAPTER XVII

### A ROMAN CENTURION AND A RUNAWAY SLAVE. THE UNIVERSAL APPEAL OF THE GOSPEL

#### WEEK DAY SESSION

#### CORNELIUS THE RIGHTEOUS CENTURION OF CÆSAREA

Acts 10:1-48

There is something in the life and teachings of Jesus that appeals to every race and condition of men. This universal appeal is clearly shown in accounts of the beginnings of the Church as they appear in The Acts and other New Testament books. The gospel as it was preached by the early Christians had an appeal for old people, for people in middle life, and for children. That it had a message for the children is shown by the many household conversions. Young Timothy found in the story of Jesus that which met his spiritual needs and that which inspired him to give his life to the service of the Christian religion. But there was something in the gospel for Eunice, the mother of Timothy, and something likewise for Lois, the grandmother of Timothy. The life and teachings of Jesus found a response in those who were highly educated and an equal response in the case of those who had hardly any education at all. People in the highest stations of life found in the gospel satisfaction and guidance. Some also from the very dregs of society were lifted and purified by the faith which accepts Jesus as Saviour and Lord. There was, among the women who followed Jesus and ministered to him, a woman named Joanna who was the wife of Herod's steward. Paul made converts among them who were of the household of Cæsar, and numbered among his Christian friends Erastus, the city treasurer of Corinth. In this chapter we are to study two of the New Testament



converts to Christianity. One was a noble-minded centurion of the Roman army; the other was a runaway slave and thief.

**A Man Who Lived Among Men Devoutly.** Acts 10:1-8. Cornelius was what is known as a Jewish proselyte; that is, he was a Gentile who in an earnest search for spiritual truth had come to believe in Jehovah, the God of the Jews, as the only true God. We are told that Cornelius was a devout man. This indicates that his conduct among men was so just and he was so humble and helpful and so evidently a worshiper of the true God that anyone could tell that these things were true of him by merely seeing him and knowing him. That Cornelius was a humble seeker after truth is shown by the fact that, although he belonged to one of the greatest families of Rome, he did not refuse to learn from the Jews, a race which was detested by nearly all Romans.

**A Man Who Walked Before God Reverently.** That which affects conduct more than anything else is a person's ideas about God and a person's attitude toward God. This Roman captain had come to know and love Jehovah, the God of the Jews, and that love and knowledge had transformed his life. This triumph of character is all the more remarkable because it belonged to a Roman soldier. The life of a soldier of that day was one of hardship and dangers, spiritual as well as physical. Many of the soldiers of Rome were fierce and cruel blackmailers who extorted money and property from citizens by threats and acts of violence. Here was a man who had triumphed over the adverse influences of his occupation and by putting temptations under his feet had gained the strength of a continuous spiritual mastery over himself. The Bible explains the source of this spiritual strength of Cornelius when it says that he was, "one that feared God."

**A Man Who Brought Up His Family Religiously.** Cornelius not only feared God but he "feared God with all his house." His children had been brought up religiously. In this task Cornelius must have overcome great difficulties. It was an evil age in which he lived. People had for the most part thrown away religious

restraint. Most people lived for selfish pleasure and vice was never more appalling. The children of Cornelius had to grow up in the midst of evil influences. He could not shield them entirely from these evils for he must have been away from home for long periods in his campaigns as a Roman captain. The influence of the righteous life of Cornelius was so great and so constant that it overbalanced all other influences and he succeeded in bringing up his children to fear God and keep God's commandments. The influence of Cornelius evidently extended to his household servants, as well as to his children. Moreover, the soldiers who came into contact with him were lifted to higher character by the fellowship with their noble commanding officer. Words dropped here and there in the narrative show us that this was true. When Cornelius wished to send messengers to Joppa, "he called two of his household-servants, and a devout soldier of them that waited on him continually."

**A Man Who Gave of His Money Liberally.** Philanthropy was well-nigh unknown in the time that Cornelius lived, yet he "gave much alms to the people." This liberality of Cornelius is an added proof that his religion was genuine. He had nothing to gain from the cripples and lepers who thronged the streets of Cæsarea. He was not trying to curry favor by his gifts. His office did not depend upon the votes of those he offered alms. He had learned of the one true God to be compassionate.

**A Man Who Prayed to God Continually.** It is said of Cornelius that he "prayed to God always." The secret of his strength of character is laid bare by this sentence. He was in continuous communion with God in prayer and that is why he had developed godlikeness. He was praying when the message came from God telling him to send to Joppa for Peter. The knowledge of Jesus which Peter gave to Cornelius was an answer to the prayers of Cornelius. So we know that this strong Roman captain as he kept the ninth hour of prayer was beseeching God to send him more light. His character seems almost perfect to us as it is pictured in the early

statements of the narrative, but to Cornelius his character must have seemed far from perfect. He was hungering and thirsting after more of truth, more of righteousness, than he had yet known. It was therefore with readiness and gladness that this righteous centurion heard and accepted the religion of Jesus.

### CAPTAIN PHILIP OF THE BATTLESHIP TEXAS

It must be hard for a young man to live the life of a Christian when he is in the army or in the navy. Nevertheless there have been many soldiers and sailors who have been like Cornelius devout and God-fearing men. Perhaps just because conditions were unfavorable they developed a spiritual strength which might not have been gained under less trying circumstances.

Captain Philip who commanded the battleship Texas during the Spanish-American War was one of these Christian sailors. His little vessel was in the hottest of the fight in the naval battle of Santiago and was struck more repeatedly by the Spanish shells than any other vessel in the conflict. As the Spanish ships began to topple over in the water before going to the bottom of the sea, a shout of triumph went up from the fighting ships of the Americans. Captain Philip, however, silenced his men saying to them, "Don't cheer, boys; those poor fellows are dying."

When the battle was won and the smoke of battle was still hanging low over the water, Captain Philip gathered his men on the scarred deck of the Texas. "Uncover," he commanded, and every hat came off. Then he said to his men, "I wish to say here and now, men, that I believe that there is a God and that he has protected us and given us the victory because our cause is just." Then with bared and bowed heads they all repeated The Lord's Prayer with the captain as their leader.

## SUNDAY SESSION

## ONESIMUS, A RUNAWAY SLAVE

## THE EPISTLE TO PHILEMON

In Cornelius we saw a man of the highest character eagerly seeking more and better spiritual light and finding it in the life and teaching of Jesus. In this lesson we are to learn concerning a young man who was almost exactly opposite to Cornelius in all matters of character and who yet found newness of life in Jesus. The story of Onesimus must be read between the lines, as it were, in a brief letter which Paul wrote to a friend of his named Philemon. From this letter it seems that Philemon had been converted to Christianity under Paul's influence, possibly while Paul was preaching in Ephesus. Philemon later moved to Colossæ, a city of Asia Minor, east of Ephesus. He was a faithful member of the Christian Church and the Christians of Colossæ made his home their meeting house.

Slavery was almost universal in those days. When people became Christians, they did not all set their slaves free, though there were signs that Christianity was already undermining the institution of slavery. A master who had become a Christian and whose slaves had become Christians of course had some difficult problems to settle. The new brotherhood into which both master and slave had entered made the former attitude of the master toward his slaves impossible and practically did away with slavery even though the slave was not always actually set at liberty.

**Onesimus Runs Away.** Philemon had a young slave named Onesimus. It may be that after Philemon became a Christian this young slave felt the loosening of his master's control and therefore decided to escape from it altogether. At all events, he stole some of his master's money and ran away. The city of Rome was then the capital of the world and all the worst elements of society tended to be drawn there as floating driftwood is drawn into a whirlpool. After wanderings and adventures of which we have no account but which Onesimus probably experienced, he found himself in

Rome. Onesimus had committed an offense punishable by death under the laws of the times and being a fugitive and a criminal it is altogether probable that he fell in with the very dregs of all the world in Rome, and learned to live the life which these outcasts, burglars, and highwaymen of the great city lived.

**Onesimus Gets Into Prison.** Onesimus must have committed some offense for which he was apprehended and cast into prison; otherwise, he could hardly have come under the influence of Paul who was a prisoner at the time. The prisons of the day were terrible places. Perhaps Paul and Onesimus met in the awful Mamertine prison of Rome. Onesimus was still hardly more than a boy and, being used to an active life in the open air, the dreary dungeon was almost unbearable to him. One day he met an old man among the prisoners. We know that Paul was growing old at the time for he says in his letter to Philemon, "yet for love's sake I rather beseech, being such a one as Paul the aged, and now a prisoner also of Christ Jesus."

Young Onesimus found this old man entirely different from all the other prisoners. He was kind and helpful and cheerful. He spent a great deal of time talking to the other prisoners about a better way of life and a Saviour who was able to help them to walk in that way.

**Onesimus Becomes a Christian.** One day Paul and Onesimus were talking and Onesimus, who had become greatly attached to the kind old man, told him all about his past career. He told him that he was a slave belonging to a certain man in Colossæ, Philemon by name, and that he had stolen his master's money and run away to Rome. Philemon? Why Paul knew Philemon! He had met him often in Asia, and Philemon had been converted to the Christian religion under his influence. And so, through Paul, Onesimus, though he was a runaway slave and a thief, learned to know and believe in Jesus and became a Christian.

The offense for which Onesimus had been cast into prison does not seem to have been serious, for he was afterward set free. Having become a Christian, he wished to undo, so far as he was able, the wrongs which

he had done. Yet he feared to go back to his master. There is always an honorable way to do what is right and Paul helped Onesimus to find it. Paul wrote a letter to Philemon telling him about Onesimus. He said, "I beseech thee for my child, whom I have begotten in my bonds, Onesimus, who once was unprofitable unto thee, but now is profitable to thee and to me." The name, Onesimus, means "profitable" and Paul was playing on the meaning of the name. What he really said was, "I beseech thee for my child, whom I have begotten in my bonds, your slave Profitable, who once was unprofitable to thee, but now is profitable to thee and me." We have here a hint of one of the great blessings which the Christian religion bestows upon the human race. It takes the outcasts, the thieves, and the beggars, those who are unprofitable to society, and makes them profitable to men and to God.

**Paul's Graciously Courteous Letter.** The letter which Paul wrote to Philemon is a masterpiece of courteous and kindly entreaty. It gives us a glimpse into the heart of the great apostle. He tells Philemon that he would gladly keep Onesimus with him in Rome but that he would do nothing without Philemon's consent. It suggests that, under the providence of God, Onesimus has been parted from Philemon for a little season in order that he may be brought back no longer a slave, but a brother beloved. He asks Philemon to receive Onesimus as he would receive Paul and adds, "If he hath wronged thee at all, or oweth thee aught, put that to mine account; I Paul write it with mine own hand, I will repay it."

**Onesimus Becomes a Preacher of the Gospel and a Helper of Paul.** The runaway slave became a preacher of the gospel. In writing to the church at Colossæ, Paul calls Onesimus "the faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you." Triumphs like this show us that Jesus is the Saviour of the world and his religion the true religion. No other religion has even been able to take the thief and the outcast and the drunkard and out of these ruined and unprofitable wrecks make men of noble character profitable to themselves, to their fellow men, and to God.

“OLD BORN DRUNK”; THE UNPROFITABLE MADE  
PROFITABLE

In his book entitled “Twice-Born Men,” Harold Begbie tells of many people who, like Onesimus, were raised from extreme degradation into the self-respect and the usefulness which ought to belong to those created in God’s image. One of these stories told by Mr. Begbie is about a man who was so confirmed a drunkard, and had been so long and so continually under the influence of liquor, that people had come to call him “Old Born Drunk.” Indeed, the poor fellow’s mother had herself been a drunkard and there was a sense in which he had been born drunk.

Old Born Drunk was an utterly unprofitable member of society. He was so stupefied with drink that he could scarcely understand or answer what was said to him. No one thought that Old Born Drunk would ever be any different. He had walked the evil way too long for any change to be wrought in him.

One night, on the invitation of a friendly Salvationist, this poor old fellow stumbled into a little crowded room where a gospel mission was being carried on. He had been there before, but he did not seem to understand what was said. He had reached a stage where the songs of the Christian faith did not seem to reach his soul. This evening, however, one of the workers in the mission whom Old Born Drunk knew, told the story of his conversion. This mission worker had been at one time an outcast and a criminal; so he knew how to deal with such people. As he talked, there was something that thrilled in Old Born Drunk’s soul emotions which had long been dead. “All of a sudden,” he said afterward, “it took me that I’d find God and get him to make me like Joe.” Old Born Drunk fell on his knees and there he found that profound spiritual change which Jesus called being born again.

From that time Old Born Drunk began to lose the name which had clung to him so long. People began to feel that it did not fit this earnest-souled old man who worked diligently all day and attended the meetings at the rescue mission at night. Many attempts were made

to tempt or force him to drink but he stood firm against them all. He "advertised salvation" to all who had known him in the past and who now saw him living a respectable and happy and helpful life. Once unprofitable to society and to himself, through the second birth he had now become profitable to his fellow men and to God.

### THE LESSON PRAYER

We thank thee, our Father in heaven, for the lessons which we have been studying out of thy Word. Help us to understand the great truths which are taught in these Bible stories. Keep us from wandering far from thee at any time. We would give our whole strength to thee and our whole time to thee, so that none of our years may be wasted. Teach us to understand the strength and beauty which are found in the character of Jesus, thy Son. We would grow more and more like him in our love for thee and in our kindness and helpfulness to those about us. Help us to make our homes cheerful and peaceful because we live like Jesus and like him think of the welfare and comfort of others. We ask for the sake of thy Son. Amen.

### THE LESSON HYMN

"O Help us, Lord; Each Hour of Need." "Studies of Familiar Hymns," page 233.

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## EXPRESSIONAL SESSION

### MISSION WORK IN LARGE CITIES

Micah 2:2, 9; Zech. 8:1-8; Heb. 11:16; Rev. 21:2

The problems of our great modern cities are so important that even boys and girls ought to become acquainted with them and learn to work for a right solution of them. The problems of the city are the problems of humanity. In this expressional lesson we are to consider some of the efforts which Christian people are making toward the solving of the problems of our large cities.



**Rescue Missions.** We have seen how the gospel of Jesus can change the lives of those who have lived long in sin and rebellion against God. This is one of the greatest needs of our cities. As young Onesimus after becoming a thief and a fugitive drifted into Rome, so in our day many of the most desperate criminals are to be found in our great cities. A rescue mission is a place where the gospel of Jesus is taught to men and sometimes to women who never go to the churches. Many of the men who come to the missions are ex-convicts, that is, men who have spent a part of their lives in a penitentiary. Many tramps come to these missions to get the soup or sandwiches often distributed to those who are cold and hungry. In these gospel missions men like Old Born Drunk are often reached and brought back to ways of usefulness and righteousness.

**Settlement Houses.** In many of our large cities there are slums, places where the streets are narrow and dirty, the buildings close together, and the people poor and ignorant and often vicious. In the slums people suffer from the lack of three things which God has made most abundant for his children. These three things are fresh air, sunlight, and room. God has covered the world with an ocean of fresh air more than a hundred miles deep, yet there are thousands of people, many of them little children, who are slowly dying in our cities because they do not get enough fresh air to keep them alive. God floods the world with sunshine every day, yet there are thousands who are languishing in city slums because like plants growing in a cellar they are not touched by the life-giving sunshine. God has made such a big world that there is abundance of room for everyone, yet we have people crowded together in cities to such an extent that in some places there is left no room to live.

A settlement house is an institution which is planted by Christian people in the midst of the slums of a city. In the settlement house there are play rooms for the children. Physicians come there to examine children and give them medicine if they are sick. There are bathrooms for the people who have no means of bathing in

their crowded homes. There are classes for teaching the foreign people how to talk English, how to cook, how to take care of their babies, and other similar purposes.

**The Battle with the Slums.** There are many Christian men and women who believe that it is our duty not only to try to help the people who live in the slums, but also to try to destroy the slums themselves. They would tear down the old, dirty, crowded tenements and put up new buildings that are clean and airy and open to the sunlight. They would widen the streets and make playgrounds for the children. They would drive out of the city all bad places, like the saloons which prey upon the people and make their homes poverty-stricken and unhappy.

#### SOME TRUTHS FROM THE LESSONS WE HAVE BEEN STUDYING

Cornelius had the spirit of those who are battling against the slums. He saw the sufferings of the people in the poor districts of Cæsarea and he "gave much alms to the people."

In our efforts to solve the problems of the city, we must have God's help. Like Cornelius, we must pray "to God always."

Many of the people of our slums are foreigners. If we are to help them we must believe, as Peter did, that "God is no respecter of persons."

Onesimus is a type of thousands of young men in our cities. They can be saved as Onesimus was by being brought to know and love Jesus, the Saviour of the world.

#### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Show that the life and the teachings of Jesus appealed to all classes of people in the first century.
2. What were the Jewish proselytes?
3. What effect had the Jewish religion had upon the character of Cornelius?
4. What did Peter learn from Cornelius?
5. Tell the story about Captain Philip.

6. What effect did the Christian religion have upon slavery?

7. Tell the story of Onesimus and his conversion to Christianity.

8. How does Paul's letter to Philemon reveal the character of Paul?

9. What are city rescue missions?

10. What is meant by "the battle with the slums"?

#### BIBLE VERSES

Ps. 46:4; 127:1; Isa. 1:18; 26:1; Zech. 8:3-5; Acts 8:7, 8; Rom. 1:16; Heb. 11:10; Rev. 3:12; 21:2.

#### STUDY TOPICS

1. An Old Testament Picture of the Evils of a City. Micah, ch. 3.

2. A Prophet's Picture of a Redeemed City. Zech. 8:1-5.

3. Jesus Weeps over the City of Jerusalem. Luke 19:41-44.

4. The Bowery Mission in New York. (Information from Bowery Mission, New York City.)

5. Hull House and Its Work. (Information from Miss Jane Addams, Hull House, Chicago.)

6. Jacob Riis and His Work for the Children of the Slums.

7. The Conversion of One Who Had Been a Wicked King. II Chron. 33:10-13.

8. The Conversion of Paul. Acts 9:1-9.

9. What Our Class Can Do for City Missions.

#### PUTTING THE TRUTHS OF THE LESSON INTO PRACTICE

Have the class, if possible, visit a city mission or a settlement house. Write to some settlement house asking what the class can do to help the work of the settlement. Have a Quiet Hour service in which city missions is the chief object of prayer. Find out about the housing laws of the state and have the pastor preach on the subject of "Christianity and the Problems of our Cities," or some similar theme.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### SOME WOMEN WHO WERE HELPERS OF PAUL

#### WEEK DAY SESSION

#### A WOMAN WHO WELCOMED THE APOSTLE TO EUROPE

Acts 16:11-40

In a previous chapter we have seen how a little company of women associated themselves with Jesus and by their aid made it possible for Jesus and his disciples to give all their time to preaching, teaching, and healing. The work of the women continued to be of much importance in the days when the Church was being organized and they are often mentioned in the book of The Acts. Paul, like Jesus, had a number of helpers among the women. Some of the women who were Paul's helpers are to be considered in the present chapter.

**A Business Woman Who Believed in God.** It was a man that Paul saw in his vision who called to him saying, "Come over into Macedonia, and help us," but it was a woman who was first in Macedonia to believe the gospel message preached by Paul and to welcome him to Europe. This woman's name was Lydia. She was a business woman who sold dyes and dyed garments which had been manufactured in her native town of Thyatira, in Asia Minor. Lydia was a believer in God before she met Paul. She was probably, like Cornelius, a Jewish proselyte.

**A Riverside Prayer Meeting.** When Paul with his companions, among whom were Luke, Silas, and Timothy, reached Philippi, they were strangers to everyone in the city. After a time they heard of a little group of people who were worshipers of Jehovah. These people had no church or synagogue in which to worship, so they had been accustomed to go a little way outside the

city and gather on the banks of a river and there hold their service of praise and prayer. So Paul and his companions went out to this meeting place by the river the first Sabbath they were in Philippi. Only a few people came and all of them were women, with the exception of Paul and his companions. Paul did not despise the opportunity because there was only a handful of people present. Like Jesus, he was willing to sit down and talk with even one woman, if by so doing he could advance the cause of the Kingdom. It was well that Paul acted as he did for that little meeting was the beginning of Christianity in Europe. More was accomplished for the Kingdom of God in that little gathering than was accomplished by Paul when he preached to a great multitude on Mars' Hill in Athens.

**A Household Conversion.** Lydia gladly accepted Jesus as the promised Messiah and the Saviour of the world and she was baptized at once. Not only Lydia but also her whole family believed, and so there was not only a Christian believer in Philippi but a Christian household. Having become a believer in Jesus, Lydia was anxious to do all that she could for Paul and his companions, who were the missionaries and representatives of Jesus. She urgently invited them to make her home their abiding place while they tarried in the city. Her modesty and courteous friendship are manifest in her words, "If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there." The home of Christian hospitality is a great force in the building up of the Kingdom of God on earth. There was now a home of this kind in Philippi.

**The Disciples Cast Into Prison.** As Paul and his companions were going to the place of prayer, perhaps the next Sabbath after Lydia had been converted, a certain young woman who was a kind of fortune teller kept crying out, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim unto you the way of salvation." The girl was in a condition similar to that of the people who were said to be possessed by demons and who were so often healed by Jesus. Paul healed the girl, but, instead of being pleased, her masters were very angry. They had

made a great deal of money by employing the girl as a fortune teller and now her value was gone.

These men who had made money through the peculiar faculties of the girl, stirred up a mob and having seized Paul and Silas, they dragged them before the magistrates. They said, "These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city, and set forth customs which it is not lawful for us to receive, or to observe, being Romans." Philippi had been made a Roman colony and the people were proud of the citizenship thus bestowed upon them. This is why they added, "being Romans." Sensible magistrates would have demanded more specific charges, for the complaints of the mob leaders were absurdly general. But the magistrates, having heard that these men were Jews, thought that it did not make any difference whether the charges were well-founded or not. The Romans despised the Jews and possibly the magistrates looked upon this as an unusually fortunate opportunity to curry favor with the multitudes. So they made a great show of being horrified by the awful charges lodged against Paul and Silas. They tore the clothing off of Paul and Silas and then ordered them to be flogged. When they had beaten them for a long time, they cast them into prison, charging the jailer to keep them fast. Having received this charge, the jailer cast them into the inner prison and made their feet fast in the stocks.

**An Earthquake Shatters the Prison.** At midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing psalms and the prisoners were listening to them, when suddenly the grim old stone prison began to totter. The doors were shaken off their hinges and all the prisoners were set free. The jailer came rushing in and, supposing that the prisoners had all escaped through the opened doors and the shattered walls and knowing that his life would be taken as the penalty for allowing the prisoners to escape, he was about to take his own life. But Paul, seeing what the jailer had in mind cried out, "Do thyself no harm: for we are all here." The jailer called for a light and running into the prison he fell down before Paul and Silas, saying, "Sirs, what must I do to be

saved?" Quickly came the answer, "Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house." The jailer then brought the disciples into his own house and they explained to him and his family what it meant to be followers of Jesus. Having confessed their faith, the jailer and his family were baptized. Then the jailer and his family took the disciples and washed and dressed the wounds which had been made by the cruel flogging. Then they set food before the disciples and there was great rejoicing in the household.

**The Magistrates Frightened.** Perhaps the magistrates heard some rumors of what had happened during the night for in the morning they sent to the jailer saying, "Let those men go." So the jailer told Paul and Silas that they were at liberty. But Paul and Silas were not willing to slip away in such a manner. So Paul said, "They have beaten us publicly, uncondemned, men that are Romans, and have cast us into prison; and do they now cast us out privily? nay verily; but let them come themselves and bring us out." When the magistrates heard that Paul and Silas were Romans, they were still more afraid, for to have treated Roman citizens in the way they had treated the disciples was a grave offense. So they came and humbly begged Paul and Silas to leave the city.

**A Farewell Meeting in the Home of Lydia.** When they had been released, Paul and Silas went to the home of Lydia. The number of Christians in Philippi had now grown to be quite large. They had been distressed over the seizing of their leaders, but now Paul and Silas "comforted them." Paul bore the scars of the scourging to the end of his days. He speaks in one of his letters of bearing "branded" on his body "the marks of Jesus." But when he departed, he carried away no brooding ill-will against the city whose officials had treated him so shamefully. He remembered only the little company of Christian believers which he had left behind and the letter which he wrote to them contains no note of bitterness, but only a spirit of sublime devotion to his "brethren beloved and longed for," his "joy and crown" of rejoicing.

OPEN HOUSE DAY IN THE HOME OF A KOREAN  
MISSIONARY

The Christian homes which missionaries establish in the midst of paganism are vastly important agencies in the evangelization of the world. Such homes are object lessons which, better than any argument by word of mouth or printed page, lead to a belief in the reality of the Christian faith. A missionary, who with his wife and family has spent many years in Korea, has made it a custom occasionally to open his home completely to the people in the midst of whom he lives. The people are, of course, welcomed in the home at any time, but on this day they are free to go through the house and inspect its every arrangement.

Poor old women who have never known any other house than a rude hut with a straw roof and a floor consisting of the bare ground, find great delight in coming to the missionary's home on this day of open house. They examine everything minutely, the covering of the beds and the cooking utensils, the carpets and the cushions of the chairs. They taste of the strange foods which have been prepared in a way entirely unfamiliar to them. It is a great day in their poor, starved lives and they go away to talk for months about what they have seen.

The missionary and his wife find these open-house days one of their best opportunities for teaching the people concerning the Christian religion. On such occasions the hospitality of the home comes in to reinforce the teaching of the missionary. If we are not using our homes for the advancement of God's Kingdom, we are failing to put to use one of the most important agencies for the evangelization of the world. The Christian home is just as important in our land as it is in lands across the sea where the foreign missionaries are at work for the Kingdom of Christ.



## SUNDAY SESSION

## PHŒBE AND PRISCILLA

Rom. 16:1, 2; Acts 18:1-4, 18-28

There are three phases of Christian activity in which women have been supreme from the very beginnings of the Christian Church. To them has fallen the important task of tender Christian ministrations to the sick, to the aged, and to little children. They have furnished most of the teachers of religion, especially those who teach the religion of Jesus to children. Last of all, and perhaps the most important of all, they have been chiefly responsible for the creation of Christian homes. These activities have not been so prominent as preaching in the history of the Christian religion, but we can hardly believe them to be second in importance to any other form of Christian service. In this lesson we are to learn about two women who took part in the forms of service which have been mentioned.

## PHŒBE, THE FIRST DEACONESS

A deaconess is a woman who, under the direction of a Christian Church, gives her life to the care of the sick, the help of the poor, the giving of counsel to those in need of spiritual guidance, and other like forms of Christian service. We have studied the account of the appointing of the first deacons as it is recorded in the sixth chapter of The Acts. The persons appointed at that time were all men. A little later we find certain women performing the kinds of service for which these men were appointed, so it is probable that the custom of appointing women as deaconesses early became general in the Church. The first woman definitely designated as a deaconess bore the name of Phœbe. The name Phœbe means pure, bright, or radiant. It is certainly an appropriate name for one who gave her life to the kindly office of ministering to her fellow Christians.

**“A Servant of the Church that Is in Cenchreæ.”** Rom. 16:1, 2. Cenchreæ is the eastern port of Corinth, a kind of suburb of that city. Paul had organized a church in

Corinth on his second missionary journey. The growth and influence of this church may have resulted in the organization of a church in Cenchreæ. It was in the church at Cenchreæ that Phœbe became known for her work in the cause of Christ's Kingdom. Paul tells us that Phœbe was the helper of many and that he himself had been helped by her. We do not know just when, or in what way, Phœbe helped Paul. We know that Paul was afflicted with some chronic malady which he called "a thorn in the flesh." We know, too, that at certain times he almost gave way under the terrific strain of his incessant labors and his constant conflict with powerful opposing forces. Whether Phœbe brought physical comfort to the apostle by ministering to him in times of sickness, or whether she brought him spiritual comfort at some time when dark despair was crowding down upon his soul, we do not know. Both forms of ministry would have come within the kind of services which a deaconess is called upon to perform.

**A Letter of Commendation to the Christian Church in Rome.** In our day when Christians remove from one community to another they are given letters of commendation from the church in the community from which they have removed to a church in the community where they are to make their future homes. Phœbe left her home in Cenchreæ to travel to Rome that she might make that city her home. In his letter to the Romans, Paul gives Phœbe a kind of church letter. He says, "I commend unto you Phœbe our sister." He tells them of the good work she has done in the community where she has been living, and asks the Roman Christians to give her their assistance in every possible way. Such a letter must have been very helpful to a woman who was going into a great city like Rome where she must meet only strangers.

**Bearer of an Immortal Document.** It has been suggested that, since the Epistle to the Romans contains this section commending Phœbe to the Roman Christians, Phœbe was the bearer of the letter from Cenchreæ to Rome. Of course, we cannot be sure of this but it seems probable. In most of his letters Paul made

some kindly reference to the person who was to act as bearer of the letter to those for whom it was written. In closing the letter to the Romans, Paul sends the greetings of many of his helpers, and Tertius, who penned the letter for Paul, inserts a little word of greeting, but none of these men are mentioned as being the bearer of the letter to Rome, whereas Phœbe is mentioned as though she were soon to arrive in Rome. It is likely, therefore, that on her journey over the sea Phœbe carried under her mantle the precious manuscript which was to live throughout the centuries and point the way to God through the life and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth.

#### PRISCILLA, HOME MAKER AND TEACHER

Jesus once said, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the heaven have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." In this respect Paul was like his Master. He had no home of his own during most of the days of his ministry. As Jesus had the quiet home in Bethany as a haven where he occasionally withdrew, so Paul found here and there homes which were open to him. We have seen how Lydia received him into her home when he was a stranger in Philippi. A little later he was an honored guest in the home of the Philippian jailer.

**A Home in Which Paul Was a Welcome Guest.** Acts 18:1-4. When Paul came to Corinth on his second missionary journey, he became acquainted with a Jew named Aquila and his wife, Priscilla. Paul had learned a trade in his youth and it was doubtless often helpful to him in earning a living. He had learned to make the coarse haircloth out of which tents were manufactured. Paul turned to his trade when he first came to Corinth and in this way he first met Aquila and Priscilla, for they were tentmakers, too. There is always a kind of fellowship between people who work at the same trade and so it came about that Paul was asked to make his home with Aquila and Priscilla. Aquila and his wife are illustrations of the wide wanderings of many people of that day. Aquila had been born in a country south of the

Black Sea known as Pontus. He and his wife had lived in Rome and had been driven from that city by a decree of Claudius Cæsar banishing all Jews from Rome. Later Aquila and Priscilla accompanied Paul to Ephesus. They must have gone again to Rome for Paul includes them among the people to whom he sends salutation by name in his letter to Roman Christians. They must have returned to Ephesus a second time, however, for in his second letter to Timothy which Paul wrote near the end of his life he says, "Salute Prisca and Aquila." Since Timothy was probably in Ephesus and the letter sent there, these two friends of Paul must have been there also.

**Aquila and Priscilla Become the Teachers of Apollos.** Acts 18:24-28. When Apollos came to Ephesus full of enthusiasm for the new light which he had seen in the doctrines preached by John the Baptist, he soon met Aquila and Priscilla. These two took Apollos under their care as their pupil and diligently taught him the things concerning Jesus. From this school of two teachers and one pupil Apollos went forth to preach the gospel of Christ in Achaia. Aquila and Priscilla had been able to turn in the direction of larger service a man who had great powers of mind and who did a great work for the spread of the Church. It is always thus with the work of the teacher. The teachers light the torches which enlighten the world.

#### A LAD WHO NEVER HAD A HOME

Donald C———— was the son of wealthy parents. His father owned a great deal of property in a large California town, as well as some thousands of acres in the rich and beautiful Sacramento Valley. Donald had about all the things that money can buy, but there are some things—and they are the most important things—which money cannot buy. Donald's father was too busy to spend any time with his little son while his boy was young, and as Donald grew older he ceased to care for his father's companionship. There did not seem to be any interests common to the two. The father was

interested only in matters of business and talked only of bonds and investments and speculations. Donald did not seem to be able to take an interest in such things and he gradually drifted away into the company of young fellows who were low and vicious.

Donald's mother was of hardly more help to him than his father was. She was always busy with her clubs and the functions of the social group to which she belonged. In his babyhood days Donald was under the care of a nurse, but as he grew into boyhood and manhood he did pretty much as he pleased. When he stayed at home nights the house seemed lonely and cheerless, so he formed the habit of staying out late and having what he called "a good time."

One day the parents awoke to the consciousness that all was not well with their son. He was becoming a victim to alcoholism and sometimes came home intoxicated. They were alarmed and tried to reclaim him from the evil habits which had fastened themselves upon him. They had neglected their duty too long, however, and their son went steadily downward. His dissolute life brought on tuberculosis and one night he died in a little untidy room of a third-class hotel in one of the large cities of the state.

Some months before he died Donald happened to be in the home of a young man whom he had known all his life. This young man had a lovely home although he was not rich. When Donald saw the happiness of his friend, witnessed the strong bond of love which bound together its inmates, husband, wife, and children, he said to his friend: "I tell you, Frank, what has been the matter with me all my life. I have never had a home. If I had had a home when I was a child and when I was a boy, it might have been different with me."

### THE LESSON PRAYER

We ask thy blessing, our Father, upon our homes. Teach us how to do our part in making them truly Christian. Help us to be obedient to our parents and show us how to honor them in all things. May we not be selfish in our home life, but seek to make our homes

useful to thee in the building of thy Kingdom of brotherhood in the world. We ask in the name of Jesus. Amen.

### THE LESSON HYMN

“O Little Town of Bethlehem.” “Studies of Familiar Hymns,” page 1.

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## EXPRESSIONAL SESSION

USING OUR HOMES FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF  
GOD'S KINGDOM

Luke 10:38-42; Psalm 128

In the lessons which we have been studying, we have seen how Lydia and Priscilla used their homes to advance God's Kingdom in the world. They were people who had a true spirit of hospitality and Christian fellowship. Philemon likewise used his home for the advancement of God's Kingdom by offering it to the Christians of Colossæ for a place of meeting. Several times we hear of these churches in homes as we read the New Testament. It is probable that homes were the most common meeting places in the Early Church.

Our Scripture lesson, chosen from Luke's Gospel, tells how Mary and Martha and Lazarus used their homes as an agency for advancing the Kingdom of God. They offered it as a place where Jesus could come and rest from his labors and talk quietly with his friends.

The psalm chosen for the lesson is a picture of a happy, religious household. It puts the fear of Jehovah as the central necessity for such a home. It shows us a happy family gathered about the table partaking of the food which has been earned in honest toil. It speaks of the joy which a father finds in his wife and children and in the peace and love of a pure and religious home life.

### SOME TRUTHS FROM THE LESSONS WE HAVE BEEN STUDYING

When Paul went into a house as a guest, he left a blessing behind for all who were members of the household.

There were Christian homes in Europe before there was a Christian Church in Europe. It is of no use to build altars in the Church if there are none in the homes.

The Philippian jailer fastened the feet of the apostles in cruel stocks before he was converted; but after his conversion he took the apostles into his own home and dressed their wounds. He used his home as a hospital and a place for the teaching of the gospel.

When Phœbe went as a stranger to Rome, Paul wrote a letter which would open Christian hearts and Christian homes to her.

Priscilla and Aquila opened their home to Paul because he was a tentmaker like themselves, but the coming in of the great apostle meant a change in their lives which made them instruments for God's use in building his Kingdom.

#### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Tell the story of Lydia's conversion to Christianity.
2. How did Paul and Silas happen to be cast into the prison at Philippi?
3. What evidences were there that the conversion of the jailer was genuine?
4. What phases of Christian service belong especially to women?
5. Describe the work of a deaconess.
6. What service had Phœbe rendered to Paul?
7. How did Paul show his high opinion of Phœbe?
8. How did Paul become acquainted with Aquila and Priscilla? What influence did he have over their lives?
9. Why is teaching an important factor in advancing God's Kingdom in the world?
10. What kind of home is described in Psalm 128?

#### BIBLE VERSES

II Sam. 6:12; Prov. 12:7; Mark 3:25; Luke 5:29; Acts 2:46; Rom. 12:9-13; Titus 1:8; Heb. 13:2; I Peter 4:8, 9; III John 5.

## STUDY TOPICS

1. The Hospitality of Abraham. Gen. 18:1-8.
2. The Hospitality of Laban. Gen. 24:28-49.
3. The Hospitality of a Shunammite Woman. II Kings 4:8-37.
4. The Hospitality of Levi the Publican. Luke 5:29-32.
5. Jesus in the Home of Zacchæus. Luke 19:1-9.
6. The True Spirit of Hospitality. Luke 3:11; Matt. 5:42.
7. Jesus in the Home of a Pharisee. Luke 7:36-50.
8. Ways in Which We Can Use Our Homes for the Good of the Church.
9. The Importance of Religion in the Life of the Home. (To be taken by the pastor of the church.)
10. The Family Altar; and Ways of Conducting Worship in the Home. (To be taken by an officer in the church, or some other adult person capable of giving suggestions as to how family worship may be carried on.)

## PUTTING THE TRUTHS OF THE LESSON INTO PRACTICE

Have the Social Committee plan for socials in the home, the object of these socials to be not the pleasure of the members of the class but the winning of new recruits for the church school. Appoint a committee to report on suitable pictures for home decoration. Have members of the class offer themselves as visitors for the Home Department and the Cradle Roll, if these departments of the church school are in existence; if they have not been organized, see what can be done toward starting them. Send flowers to the homes of those who are sick.



## CHAPTER XIX

### NICODEMUS AND JOSEPH OF ARIMATHÆA, SECRET DISCIPLES OF JESUS

#### WEEK DAY SESSION

##### A MAN WHO CAME TO JESUS BY NIGHT

John 3:1-21; 7:45-52; 19:38-42

As Jesus went about the country preaching and healing, people formed widely different opinions concerning him. Some who were blinded by prejudice said, "He is an imposter and in league with the prince of the demons." Some said, "He is a good man." Others maintained that he was a good man but mistaken in his ideas and therefore dangerous because he led the people astray. Some of his relatives and friends thought that Jesus was mentally unbalanced. There were others who saw in Jesus the fearlessness and the righteous indignation of some of the Old Testament prophets. These said, "This is one of the prophets come to life again." There were a few who, like Peter, had come to see the grandeur of the character of Jesus and who said, "This is the Messiah, the Son of the living God." There were some people who were convinced that Jesus had come from God and wished in their hearts to be his followers, but who lacked the courage to come out publicly with a confession of their faith in him. In this chapter we are to study about two of these people who did not have the courage to back up their convictions with an open confession of their faith in Jesus.

**A Member of the Sanhedrin Who Was Impressed by the Miracles of Jesus.** John 3:1-3. Nicodemus was a Pharisee and a member of the highest Jewish court called the sanhedrin. He was less prejudiced than most of the Pharisees; consequently he was more honest at heart than they. He could not believe that Jesus wrought miracles through the aid of Beelzebub. He saw that

Jesus' acts of healing were done in a spirit of compassion for those in distress and were not at all a display used to gain favor with the multitudes. But Nicodemus was a Pharisee high in office. The Jewish leaders had already rejected Jesus and Nicodemus knew that he would lose a great deal if he should proclaim himself a believer in Jesus. He would be despised by his associates and deprived of his office; perhaps in the end his life would pay the penalty. Nicodemus knew well the fierce opposition which his fellow Pharisees had already developed toward Jesus; therefore he hesitated. He wished to find some middle ground which would not subject him to so severe a loss. And so he came to have a talk with Jesus. He came at night, that his coming might not be known to his fellow Pharisees.

**The Conversation on the Housetop.** John 3:4-21. Jesus knew that Nicodemus must have something more than a sense of wonder at the miracles he had witnessed if he were to become a true disciple. So Jesus said nothing at all about the miracles of healing which had so impressed Nicodemus. He told Nicodemus of some sublime truths, some spiritual miracles, as it were, of which Nicodemus had not yet caught even a glimpse. He told him of the new birth, of the infinite love of God which caused him to send his Son into the world, of the descent of the Son of Man from heaven to earth, and of the lifting up of the Son of Man that all men might be drawn to him.

Nicodemus had witnessed some of the miracles of healing and had come to Jesus to say, "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that thou doest, except God be with him." In the conversation which followed Jesus gave Nicodemus additional evidence that he was a teacher come from God, for the truths taught by Jesus are a proof that he came from God. But Nicodemus could not bring his courage up to the point required for an open confession of his faith in Jesus and so he went away to keep his seat in the sanhedrin and to try to be a follower of Jesus without letting anyone know about it.

**A Voice of Protest in the Sanhedrin.** John 7:45-52. It must have been a trying time for Nicodemus, those

days when he met with the other Pharisees in the sanhedrin and in social gatherings, and when he heard day after day the bitter and unceasing denunciations of Jesus by his companions. He must have felt many times that he ought to speak out in defense of the teacher whom he believed had come from God, but he thought of the consequences of such an utterance and he held his peace.

Then the time came when the sanhedrin decided that Jesus must be seized and put to death. Nicodemus heard all that was said and he still kept silence. His position was becoming more and more desperate. Was he to sit in a court which was condemning a man unheard and seeking to take his life in such an irregular way? If he still kept still, would he himself not be a party to the crime? Thoughts like these must have come to Nicodemus in the days when the sanhedrin was plotting to destroy Jesus.

At last the sanhedrin sent officers to seize Jesus. These officers found Jesus speaking to the people. They were so impressed by what Jesus was saying that they made no attempt to seize him. They returned empty-handed to the sanhedrin. "Why did ye not bring him?" demanded the leaders of the Pharisees. The officers replied, "Never man so spake." The Pharisees replied sneeringly: "Are ye also led astray? Hath any of the rulers believed on him, or of the Pharisees? But this multitude that knoweth not the law are accursed." Nicodemus was sitting there among the Pharisees. He heard all that was said. He was both a ruler and a Pharisee and he had believed on Jesus. Was he to continue to keep silence? Should he allow the statement that no ruler or Pharisee had believed on Jesus to go unchallenged? The time had come when he must speak, or by his silence deny his Lord. So he spoke out and said, "Doth our law judge a man, except it first hear from himself and know what he doeth?" This was not a confession of faith in Jesus, but it was the first word which had been spoken and which expressed any desire to see justice done. It aroused the Pharisees to a frenzy of rage and apprehension. The multitudes had become followers of Jesus, the officers sent to arrest him had

been so impressed that they made no attempt to seize him, and now one of their most prominent members had opened his mouth in defense of the Galilæan teacher. Turning in scorn upon Nicodemus they said: "Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and see that out of Galilee ariseth no prophet." If Nicodemus believed that Jesus was a teacher come from God, he should have said more than he did. He should have protested vigorously against the criminal proceedings under which Jesus was being condemned and hounded to his death. But Nicodemus was not of that heroic type of men who are willing to suffer and die for the truth; at least, he had not reached that stage of development yet. For the time being, he was silenced by the sneers and the false Biblical interpretations of his opponents. He was not yet able to stand steadfastly for righteousness and to stand alone.

**Myrrh and Aloes for the Body of Jesus.** John 19:38-42. It is probable that Nicodemus was not present in that stormy session of the sanhedrin when Jesus was condemned. We can hardly believe that he could have kept silence during such scenes of violence and shame as marked the trial and condemnation of Jesus. It may be that he had not been summoned to the meeting because of his known sympathy with Jesus. We hear of him again only after Jesus had been crucified. A certain man named Joseph took away the body of Jesus and carried it to his own tomb. Nicodemus brought about a hundred pounds of myrrh and aloes with which to prepare the body of Jesus for burial. By this act Nicodemus openly declared himself the friend of Jesus. The preparing of the body of a person for burial was a task performed by the relatives and close friends of the departed. The Pharisees must have understood at once the significance of this open act of Nicodemus.

**Too Late for the Largest Service.** Nicodemus might have done something of vastly more importance than preparing the body of Jesus for burial. He had an opportunity to defend Jesus in an hour of need. Had he come out courageously at the first, although he could not have saved Jesus from the envy of the Pharisees,

he could have set a good example to others who like himself were halting between two opinions. He might have become one of the greatest of the disciples. He might have been like Paul or Peter. He waited too long. He lost his most sublime opportunities while he was a secret disciple. Myrrh and aloes for the body of Jesus could not make up for the failure to confess his Lord openly and without regard to consequences.

#### HOW TOM BROWN CAME TO SEE THE SHAME OF SECRET DISCIPLESHIP

Tom Brown was brought up in a Christian home. His mother taught him to read the Bible and to say his prayers at night. When Tom was twelve or thirteen years old he was sent away to a boarding school. The good mother knew that her son would find some new temptations in his new environment and she was anxious about him. She asked him to read his Bible every day and to pray to God every night as she had taught him from his childhood. Tom promised her that he would.

When Tom went into the big dormitory the first night, he felt very lonesome and he did not like to kneel down by his bed to say his prayers when all the other boys were talking and laughing. He was afraid that they would laugh at him and think that he was a kind of baby. So he got into bed and waited until the lights were out; then he got out of bed, knelt down, and said his prayers. After a few nights he concluded that he had just as well say his prayers in bed. Then he began to forget about his prayers sometimes. At last it came to pass that he hardly ever said his prayers at all.

At about this time a timid little fellow named Arthur came to the school. The first night Arthur was in the dormitory he looked about the big room after he was ready for bed. He hesitated, for the boys were all talking and laughing as they had done on the night when Tom first came to the school. But Arthur did not do as Tom did. He knelt down beside his bed to say his prayers. Almost instantly the talking and laughing ceased. Then a big bully threw a shoe at Arthur calling him a "sniv-

eling young shaver." That was too much for Tom and in a moment the boot which he had just drawn off flew straight at the head of the bully, who had just time to throw up his arm and catch it on his elbow. "Confound you, Brown, what does that mean?" roared the bully. "Never mind what I mean," said Tom. "If any fellow wants the other boot he knows how to get it." As he lay on his bed that night Tom saw what a coward he had been and how much more courageous little Arthur was than any of the boys who had laughed at him for saying his prayers. He resolved that henceforth he would play the man and do what he knew to be right, what he had promised his mother to do. The next night when Arthur knelt to say his prayers, Tom knelt, too. It was not many days before others boys followed the example set by Arthur and Tom, and before the end of the year there were few of the boys who did not kneel by their beds at night.

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## SUNDAY SESSION

ANOTHER MEMBER OF THE SANHEDRIN WHO WAS  
A SECRET DISCIPLE

Matt. 27:57-60; Mark 15:42-47; Luke 23:50-56; John  
19:38-41

Nicodemus was not the only member of the sanhedrin who believed in Jesus and tried to be a secret disciple. There was a man named Joseph who lived in a town called Arimathæa who believed in Jesus but who did not confess his faith openly for a long time. There may have been other Pharisees and officials who believed in Jesus as Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathæa did, but who kept their beliefs to themselves because they were in the minority and because they did not have that courageous devotion to truth which was capable of making them open disciples of Christ. We learn in The Acts of the Apostles that soon after the Day of Pentecost there was a multitude of priests who believed. This multitude of believing priests may have been made up

largely of those who had been secret believers in Jesus during the days of his ministry, and who after the death and resurrection of Jesus gained courage to confess their faith before their fellow men.

**“A Good and Righteous Man . . . Who Was Looking for the Kingdom of God.”** Luke 23:50, 51. All the Gospel narratives speak in high terms of the character of Joseph of Arimathæa. Luke says that he “was a councilor, a good and righteous man . . . who was looking for the kingdom of God.” Luke also tells us that Joseph had not consented to the verdict of the sanhedrin which condemned Jesus and that he had not given his consent to the fixing of the death penalty. Indeed, as we read the accounts of the trial of Jesus before the sanhedrin given in the Gospel narratives, we see that there was no formal vote taken. The high priest, having heard the claim of Jesus to being God’s Son, rent his clothes and cried out saying: “What further need have we of witnesses? Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye?” There was an answering shout from the assembly saying that Jesus was worthy of death, but there was apparently no opportunity given for a negative vote. Luke’s statement means that Joseph of Arimathæa had not joined in this clamorous verdict which declared Jesus guilty of blasphemy. It may be that he even raised his voice in protest; we do not know.

It is to be regretted that Joseph tried to be a secret disciple rather than an open disciple of Jesus. He could not help either Jesus or the cause of the Kingdom very much by being a secret disciple. Here was a man who was looking and longing for the Kingdom of God, but who did not have the courage to give up all, if necessary, that the Kingdom might come.

**A Secret Disciple Grown Bold.** Mark 15:42-47. After Joseph had seen Jesus on trial, scourged, crowned with thorns, and crucified, he stopped trying to be a secret disciple. Mark says that he went “boldly” to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus that he might give it a decent burial. Joseph evidently felt that he could no longer refuse to acknowledge his faith in one who had lived and died for the truth in the way that Jesus had lived

and died. To go to Pilate and ask for the body, did, indeed, require boldness. It marked Joseph as a disciple of Jesus at a time when the followers of Jesus were scattered and in hiding. It was a time when the cause of Jesus seemed forever and hopelessly lost. Joseph must have known that the fierce hatred of the Pharisees and priests would be turned toward him as a traitor to his country and an apostate to the faith of his fathers. Yet he cared for none of these things now. He had been a secret disciple long enough and was evidently sorry for his cowardice. He would do what he could to make amends to the Master whom he had loved but failed to honor as he should.

And so it came to pass that, when nearly all the followers of Jesus had fled and were in hiding, Joseph of Arimathæa, a secret disciple for fear of the Jews, took the lead in removing the body of Jesus from the cross and preparing it for burial.

**The New Rock-Hewn Tomb.** Luke 23:53-56. Joseph owned a newly constructed tomb in a burial place near Jerusalem and it was here that the body of Jesus was laid. Joseph seemed to feel that he had done so little for Jesus during the days that Jesus was alive that he ought to do all that he could now. He saw now the great mistake which he had made in trying to be a secret disciple. Certain precious opportunities to learn of Jesus and to help his cause had gone beyond recall, but Joseph was determined to do what he could to show his love for Jesus. He could not now invite Jesus to his home; he could, however, give his body a resting place. He could become an open disciple and face the enemies of Jesus with an avowal of his allegiance to the crucified Saviour.

#### A STORM WHICH HELPED A YOUNG LAD TO APPRECIATE HIS MOTHER

Elbert lived in the country and attended school in a little frame schoolhouse a mile from his home. He was a boy who usually wished to do what was right, but sometimes he was irritable with his mother and other members of the family and seemed to have little appre-



ciation of all that was done for him. One morning when his mother called him to get up and get ready for school, he did not feel like getting out of bed so he murmured a drowsy, "well," in answer to his mother's call and was soon asleep again. When his mother called again, he grew peevish and came down to the breakfast table with a scowl on his face. After breakfast he went out to feed his pet rabbits, but before he had time to get the feed, he heard his mother calling him to come in and help her with the dishwashing. This annoyed him greatly and he shouted back in a very rude way saying: "Aw, mother, I'm no girl. I am busy and I don't want to wash the dishes. I'll be late for school." He finally did wash the dishes, but he had a scowl on his face all the time he was doing it. Then he dashed off to school, slamming the door and without kissing his mother or bidding her good-by.

At recess he was playing in the school yard with some of the other boys, when all at once they saw a peculiar cloud shaped like a long funnel, reaching from the black clouds of the sky right down to the earth. As they looked they saw dust rolling up where the cloud touched the earth and they began to hear a low, sullen roar which seemed to fill all the air. The teacher came running out of the schoolhouse and cried to the children to run to the cyclone cellar which was near the school building. These cellars are built for the protection of the people in sections of the country where these dreadful cyclones, or tornadoes, occur. Inside of the cellar the children and their teacher heard a great roaring crash as the storm struck the schoolhouse and demolished it. After the wind had passed there were torrents of rain and great hailstones came pelting down until there were heaps of ice in the roads and ditches.

When the storm grew a little less terrific, the children slipped out of the cellar and ran for their homes. Elbert ran along the road as fast as he could, but it was so full of splintered boards and branches of trees that he could make but slow progress. He wondered whether he should ever see his mother again. Had the tornado struck their house and destroyed it as it demolished the

schoolhouse? He remembered now that he had been very cross that morning and had left the house without kissing his mother and bidding her good-by. As he struggled along the road he saw some one coming through the storm to meet him. A little later he saw that it was his mother and he was soon in her arms.

That night as Elbert knelt by his bed, he offered this little prayer. "O Father, forgive me for being so mean and hateful this morning. Thou hast given me so many things to make me happy. Help me to bring joy and happiness to everything and everybody in thy beautiful world." Adapted from "Stories for Worship and How to Follow Them Up," by Hugh Hartshorne.

#### THE LESSON PRAYER

Help us, our Father in heaven, to appreciate the blessings which we enjoy. Forgive us if we have been peevish and rude toward those we love. Give us more perfect self-mastery so that we may overcome irritation and petty annoyances and inconveniences. Teach us how to appreciate all that is done for us by our parents, teachers, and friends, and grant that we may show this appreciation by being truly and courteously thankful. We ask in the name of Jesus. Amen.

#### THE LESSON HYMN

"Abide with Me: Fast Falls the Eventide." "Studies of Familiar Hymns," page 169.

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### EXPRESSIONAL SESSION

FLOWERS FOR OUR LOVED ONES WHILE THEY LIVE

Psalm 42; I Peter 1:5-11; Matt. 26:6-13

Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathæa did not appreciate Jesus and his teachings until after he was no longer with them. This is a very common failing. We are very apt to have an inadequate appreciation of our friends and our relatives while we are with them. When we are

separated from them, we see their value and their virtues as we have not seen them before. And so we are apt to lose the opportunities we have for showing our appreciation. We keep our flowers until our loved ones have gone from us and then we try to make amends for our neglect by floral offerings and words of appreciation which might have brightened the pathway of those we loved, but to whom we failed to give adequate expressions of affection and appreciation while they lived. The Christian religion ought to overcome this defect of character. It ought to make us more appreciative and more thoughtful in expressing our appreciation.

This failure to appreciate our blessings is not confined to our relationships with our friends and relatives. It is the same with our attitude toward the Church. If we have the opportunity to go to church every Sunday or oftener, we are apt to feel as though going to church is a burdensome duty; but if we were in a land where there were no churches, we would almost certainly come to long for the services of praise and worship which have become so commonplace to some of us. The Forty-second Psalm seems to have been written by a person who had been taken captive by a foreign army and who was being carried away from the land of Palestine into hopeless bondage. The writer may have been a priest or a Levite for he speaks of having led the people in the Temple services:

“These things I remember, and pour out my soul within me,  
How I went with the throng, and led them to the house of God,  
With the voice of joy and praise, a multitude keeping holyday.”

When Mary broke her alabaster cruse of precious ointment and anointed the head of Jesus, she was showing her appreciation of the Saviour of the world. She did not wait until Jesus had been crucified, as Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathæa did, before she expressed her appreciation of him.

#### SOME TRUTHS FROM THE LESSONS WE HAVE BEEN STUDYING

Prejudice and jealousy are deadly foes of appreciation. These unlovely qualities of character kept many of the

Jewish leaders from appreciating the character and the teachings of Jesus.

The attempt to live as a secret disciple of Jesus makes it impossible for the believer in Christ to give adequate expression to his appreciation of his Master.

The attempt to live as a secret disciple of Jesus is usually abandoned after a little while. Either the person making the attempt gives up and ceases to believe in Jesus, or he comes out in an open confession as Joseph and Nicodemus did.

One of the worst things about secret discipleship is the fact that it wastes the precious opportunities which come for bearing witness for Jesus Christ.

Secret discipleship is usually due to cowardice, and no one who is a coward can be a strong Christian.

Secret disciples will never do much toward the setting up of God's Kingdom in the world.

The trial and crucifixion of Jesus caused Joseph of Arimathæa to come out boldly as a disciple of Jesus. The secret disciple of our times needs to get a clearer view of the meaning of the sacrifice made on Calvary.

#### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Tell of the various opinions which different persons expressed concerning Jesus.

2. Why was Nicodemus impressed more by the miracles of Jesus than he was by the teachings of Jesus?

3. Why is it hard to be a secret disciple?

4. What did Nicodemus lose by trying to be a secret disciple?

5. When Tom Brown went to the boarding school, he manifested moral cowardice. That he was not afflicted with physical cowardice is shown by his defiance of the bully who had thrown a shoe at Arthur. Which is harder to maintain, moral courage or physical courage?

6. What kind of man was Joseph of Arimathæa?

7. Why do you think he tried to be a secret disciple? In what sense did he fear the Jews?

8. What caused Joseph of Arimathæa to come out boldly as a believer in Jesus.

9. Is it possible for a boy or girl to be a secret follower of Jesus to-day?

10. Tell how a storm helped a boy to appreciate his mother.

#### BIBLE VERSES

Prov. 19:22; 31:26; Matt. 10:42; 25:34-40; John 1:11; Rom. 12:9, 10; I Cor. 13:4-8; Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:12-17; III John 5-8.

#### STUDY TOPICS

1. How Jacob Learned to Appreciate His Home and His Relatives. Gen. 28:10-22.

2. Great Leaders Who Have Not Been Appreciated in Their Day. I. Moses. Num. 14:1-4.

3. Great Leaders Who Have Not Been Appreciated in Their Day. II. Jeremiah. Jer. 37:11-21.

4. Great Leaders Who Have Not Been Appreciated in Their Day. III. Paul. Acts 22:22-24.

5. How Jesus Sought to Teach His Disciples Appreciation of Their Opportunities. Matt. 13:17.

6. Ways in Which We Can Show that We Appreciate Our Relatives and Friends.

7. Ways in Which We Can Show that We Appreciate the Church.

8. Ways in Which We Can Show Our Appreciation of What Jesus Has Done for Us.

9. Lack of Appreciation a Serious Defect of Character.

10. Why Secret Discipleship Is Not Becoming to a Christian.

#### PUTTING THE TRUTHS OF THE LESSON INTO PRACTICE

Plan for the sending of birthday cards to relatives and friends. Choose cards that express appreciation, or write them with this end in view. Have the class take up some task for the church, as an expression of its appreciation of what the church has done in organizing and maintaining a church school. Give an opportunity to pupils to become professed followers of Christ, if all have not already done so.

## CHAPTER XX

### THE FELLOWSHIP OF BELIEVERS IN THE EARLY CHURCH

#### WEEK DAY SESSION

#### RACIAL AND SOCIAL DISTINCTIONS OBLITERATED

Acts 8:14-17; 26-40; Philemon 15, 16

We have now studied the New Testament narratives concerning all the more prominent early followers of Jesus. The study of these individuals has given us some interesting facts concerning the whole body of Christian believers in the Early Church. There are likewise certain other statements made concerning the early Christians which we ought to study and which have not been considered in our previous lessons. The two closing chapters of this book will therefore be concerned with a study of the whole group of Christian believers of the Early Church rather than with individuals belonging to that group.

**The Religion of Jesus Meets and Conquers Race Prejudice.** Acts 8:14-17; ch. 10. The race prejudice which existed between Jews and Samaritans in the first century was extremely bitter. It had been growing for hundreds of years. It had been fanned at times into the flames of war. The Jews at one time attacked Samaria and burned the temple on Mount Gerizim which they looked upon as a rival of the Temple in Jerusalem. Jesus came face to face with this ancient and deeply-entrenched prejudice in the days of his ministry. He would have none of it. He made no concessions whatever to it. On the other hand he combated it. One day Jesus and his disciples were leaving Judea for Galilee. The apostles were evidently not yet aware of their Master's attitude toward Samaritans, for it was early in the ministry of Jesus. They proposed to go by the usual route pursued by the Galilæan Jews in their journeys to and from

Jerusalem, that is, they planned to go from Jerusalem down into the Jordan Valley, thence along the eastern bank of that river to its point of departure from the Sea of Galilee, thence up the hills to the region of Cana and Nazareth. They were accustomed to make this long detour rather than set foot on the soil of the despised Samaritans. Jesus would make no such concession. We are told that "he must needs pass through Samaria." That is he insisted on going direct from Judea to Galilee through the land of Samaria.

On this journey Jesus showed a friendly spirit toward the Samaritans by talking with a Samaritan woman by the well of Sychar. Later, he spent some days in a Samaritan village, preaching and teaching. In one of his greatest parables he made the hero of the tale a Samaritan. He healed one day a group of lepers and there was a Samaritan among them. Jesus made no distinction, but healed the Samaritan with the others.

So we are not surprised to learn that after the resurrection of Jesus the disciples went into Samaria and preached the gospel. The ancient prejudice was crumbling. In a little while not only the Samaritans who were partly of Jewish ancestry but all Gentiles were being admitted freely to the Christian brotherhood.

When the Ethiopian was converted and baptized, Christianity met and conquered that persistent prejudice which springs up between people who are of different color. The Ethiopian was a Negro, but in his zeal for Christ, Philip climbed up into the chariot and talked with him and afterward baptized him as a member of the universal brotherhood in Christ.

**The Religion of Jesus Conquers Social Prejudice.** The prejudice of the Jews against those of their nation who had become taxgatherers for the Romans was very strong. The publicans were social outcasts. Jesus would make no concessions to this prejudice, just as he would not yield to the prejudice against the Samaritans. He went into publicans' houses and ate with them. He chose one to be a disciple. This is why we find the doors of the Christian Church of the first century open to all.

**Masters and Slaves Made Brothers.** Philemon 15, 16. In the story of Onesimus we saw how the Christian

religion caused a runaway slave who had stolen his master's money to return to his former place as a slave. But Paul well knew that the old conditions of slavery could not exist between a Christian master and his Christian slave, so he confidently sent Onesimus back to Philemon with the suggestion that they were now brothers in Christ. It is the spirit of brotherhood in Christ which, more than anything else, has banished slavery from the world.

**Rich and Poor Meet Together.** Acts 2:44, 45. Some of the people who became Christians in the first days of the Church were very poor. Many did not own even themselves, for they were slaves. Some of the people had considerable property, and a few were wealthy. These differences as to worldly possessions did not cause any distinction among the first century Christians. They were all together. Those who had property sold a part, or all of it, and put the proceeds into a common fund to be used by any member of the Church who might be in need. When these people of wealth came with their offerings for the common good and knelt to worship the universal Father with those who had been beggars and slaves and despised publicans, it was a scene which the world had not witnessed before.

**The Wise and the Simple Help One Another.** There were educated men who came flocking into the Early Church, a multitude of priests who had been educated in the lore of the Old Testament and who had been cold and proud in their haughty isolation from the rest of humanity. There were men like Apollos and Paul who had been trained in the greatest schools of the day and who learned in Jesus how to use their learning for the service of their fellow men. There were multitudes who had no education at all, in the ordinary sense of that term. They could neither read nor write, but they had heard the story of Jesus and their hearts had responded to him who is the Saviour of all mankind. How helpful the fellowship of men like Apollos must have been to these less fortunate brethren! And yet the helpfulness was not all on one side. The person of great learning who loses touch with his fellow men is very unfortunate.



The fellowship of unlearned peasants was therefore helpful to men like Paul and Apollos.

### ALL PEOPLE OF EQUAL VALUE IN THE SIGHT OF GOD

When we say that all people are equal in the sight of God, we do not mean that all are equal in their ability or in their possessions. We mean that all are equally valuable to God who is the Father of all. We mean that God loves them equally.

His love for each child of his is so great that it cannot be measured, so great that it is infinite and all infinite things are equal.

One day President McKinley was on a journey and happened to be in a small village for a part of a Sunday. He went to a little Methodist church of the village for the morning service. It happened to be Communion Sunday. When the invitation was given to come forward to the altar to partake of the Communion, President McKinley came forward with the others. Seeing a vacant place beside an old colored man who was kneeling at the altar rail, the President knelt there. When the Negro saw the President kneeling beside him, he started to move to another part of the altar rail, but the President detained him. Placing his hand kindly on the shoulder of the colored man, he said, "Don't go away, brother, we are all equal here." It was this sense of universal brotherhood that the early Christians had caught that made of them one great family under the fatherhood of God.

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## SUNDAY SESSION

### FELLOWSHIP IN WORSHIP AND IN LABOR

Acts 2:42, 43, 46, 47; 13:1-3

As we read the early chapters of The Acts, we are impressed by the power which the Early Church manifested. Jesus had told his disciples to tarry in Jerusalem until they had received power from on high, and this power had come to them in harmony with their Lord's promise on the Day of Pentecost. Yet the power of the

Church had a direct relationship to the spirit of unity which has been studied in the preceding lesson. The believers of Jesus were of one accord. They possessed that unity for which Jesus had prayed when he asked that his followers might be one, as he and the Father were one, that the world might believe that the Father had sent him. They possessed power because they were not divided by social and racial prejudices, but had the spirit of a universal brotherhood. They were not yet divided into factions over unimportant matters of doctrine, but "continued stedfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship."

**Services of Praise and Prayer.** Acts 2:42, 46, 47. The Christians at first held their meetings in the Temple. They had been accustomed to worship there before becoming Christians and simply continued to gather at the accustomed place. Their meetings in the Temple were probably held in some one of the Temple courts where they prayed, sang psalms, and talked over the great truths of the Christian faith. But the services of worship were not confined to these Temple gatherings. Besides the daily meetings in the Temple, there were meeting in the homes. In these home prayer meetings they partook of the Lord's Supper, thus keeping constantly before their minds the great fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion. The communion of the Lord's Supper is a picture of the unity of believers and of their dependence upon Christ for spiritual nourishment.

**A Period of Joyous and Rapid Growth.** Acts 2:46, 47. During the little while which elapsed between the Day of Pentecost and the outbreak of the first persecution, the Church made wonderful progress. The Christians were such a joyous band and they were so broad in their friendships that they had "favor with all the people." Every day there were additions to the Church. We have in this account of the early Christian Church a picture of what the Church ought to be at all times, a picture of what God intended that the Church should be, and a picture of what the Church might be if there was the kind of fellowship and devotion which Jesus wishes his followers to have.

**Organizing the Missionary Enterprise.** Acts 13:1-3. The early Christians did not spend all their time in holding meetings for prayer and praise. They had received the sublime commission to make disciples of all nations and they were soon organizing for that great undertaking. It has been true through all the history of Christianity that any church which becomes self-centered and loses its zeal for winning all the world for Christ soon loses its own spiritual life. The first Christians were not content to have a happy time together, singing praises and uniting in prayers and breaking bread at home, while they forgot about the world-wide field for service to which their Master had pointed them. We find the church at Jerusalem sending Peter and John into Samaria. Later the church at Antioch, having grown great in numbers, set apart two of its members to launch out in a mission enterprise more ambitious than had yet been attempted. There is a fellowship in worship and there is a fellowship in Christian labor. Both are needed for an efficient Christian church organization.

**Organizing the Philanthropic Activities of the Church.** Acts 11:27-30. It is the task of the Christian Church to minister not only to the spiritual needs of men but to render physical comfort and succor in times of need. Indeed, there can be no sharp distinction between these two types of service. It often happens that in rendering physical service, the Church finds that it has rendered the truest kind of spiritual service. In this respect the Church is most efficient when it walks in the footsteps of its Master who ministered to both the bodies and the souls of men.

The early Christians saw this truth. When a great famine threatened they began to organize their work of relief. Paul and Barnabas had been successful in the task to which they had been assigned by their brethren of the home church. They had preached the gospel of Jesus in hundreds of places where it had not been heard before, but they did not feel it a task unworthy of them when the members of the Antioch church sent them to Jerusalem with offerings for the poor of that city.

**The Teaching Task of the Church.** Eph. 4:11-16.

Many of those who came into the Christian Church in the days of its beginning were, as we have seen, people of little education. The leaders of the Church of that day did not make the mistake which some modern churches have made in seeking for numbers, as though that were the chief thing to be desired. Those who sought admission to the Church were carefully taught before they were given the full privileges of membership. This became especially necessary after the Gentiles began to come into the Church in large numbers. Many of these people had lived all their lives in pagan darkness. Pagan habits had become a part of their lives. They needed to be taught diligently the new way of life in Jesus Christ. There came to be, therefore, a class of people in the Church who were called catechists. These catechists were teachers who took the catechumens, or candidates for baptism, and taught them the essentials of the Christian faith.

#### CHRISTIANITY AND CHILDHOOD

The religion of Jesus has brought about a great change in the attitude of adults toward children in all lands where it has really taken hold of the lives of the people. This change began to be manifest from the very first days of the Christian Church. It was a time when under the Roman law parents could take a child out to some deserted spot and leave it to starve, if they did not care to take the trouble to raise it. Into a world where such things were permitted by law, Jesus came saying, "See that ye despise not one of these little ones: for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven."

Nero had a little stepson, the child of his wife Poppæa. One night this little fellow, who was three or four years of age, came romping into the banquet hall, where Nero sat with some of his state officials. Nero was in a drunken rage and had quarreled with Poppæa. Seeing the child angered him all the more. He seized a crystal goblet from off the table and hurled it at the little boy, saying: "We have had enough of this by-breed. Away

with him!" The child was knocked senseless by the blow. That night Nero sent his servants to take the life of the little son of his wife as he lay in bed still unconscious from the cruel blow.

There were a good many people in Rome who did not recoil in horror from the cruel act of Nero. They had become used to such things and had not seen childhood in the light of him who said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me." If we wish to know how the Christians of that day loved their children, we can learn something from going down into the catacombs, which are vast chambers underneath the city of Rome, where the Christians hid from Nero and his officers in the days of persecution.

On the walls of the catacombs is a rude drawing, a shepherd with a lamb in his arms. Beneath is written in rude characters the words: "Portia, age ten. Precious lamb, she will awake when the good shepherd comes."

#### THE LESSON PRAYER

Make us conscious, our Father in heaven, of the debt which we owe to the Church of thy Son. Help us to realize something of what it has accomplished in the world. Give us that spirit of sympathy and brotherliness which was manifest among thy people in the early years of the Church. Take out of our hearts anything of ill will or prejudice which keeps us from the largest service and the fullest devotion to thy cause. Help us to be kind to those who are poor, to those who are of a different race from ourselves, and to people of other nations. We ask in the name of Jesus. Amen.

#### THE LESSON HYMN

"Nearer, My God, to Thee." "Studies of Familiar Hymns," page 117.

**EXPRESSIONAL SESSION****THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY AS A TYPE OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM**

Eph. 3:14 to 4:16

As we have studied the accounts concerning the early Christians, we have seen how much like a family they were. They met together often and partook of the communion of the Lord's Supper around a common table, like one large family. They had the spirit of a Christian family, for there was a deep sense of brotherhood. As the smallest and weakest member of a Christian family receives the most thoughtful care, so in the Church established by the apostles there was loving care for children, for the aged, and for those who were sick. Just as a family has a common fund out of which the members of the household receive that which they need, so the early Christians formed a common treasury from which the needs of all were to be supplied.

The extension of the spirit of the Christian family so as to include all the peoples of the earth is the goal of the Christian religion. When the day comes that all mankind are bound together in the spirit of love and fellowship and service which is found in a truly Christian home, the Kingdom of Christ will be well established in the world. Let us see what it would mean to have this spirit of the Christian family widened to include all races and nations and kindreds and tongues. It would mean for one thing the end of race prejudice and all that has grown out of that unlovely trait. In the Christian home the big brother does not despise his little sister because she happened to be born with a darker shade of skin than he himself possesses. It would mean the end of social prejudices and the disastrous results which have come from the divisions with which it has afflicted humanity. In a Christian family the elder brother who is in college does not despise his little brother who is learning to read a few words in the primer. In a Christian home if one member has gained wealth enough to own an automobile, he shares it with the other members of the household and does not think himself superior to

his relatives who are not so prosperous. As the interest of a Christian home centers around the helpless baby, and as the baby receives first consideration and the most devoted care, so in the Kingdom of Jesus, little children will have first place in the plans and labors of humanity. Childlike races will not be exploited by stronger peoples, because they are the children in the family of God.

The extension of the family spirit to all mankind would mean the end of wars, and the end of labor difficulties which express themselves in strikes and lockouts. It would mean the destruction of the slums of our great cities. It would mean, in fact, the establishment of that brotherhood of man which has been foreseen and longed for by the great-souled people of the earth through many centuries.

The program of Jesus aims at nothing less than the establishment of the family spirit of love and service throughout the earth; and there is power in the religion of Jesus to accomplish the task. During the first few years of the Christian Church, giant strides were made in the direction of this goal. The Church later lost sight of it for a time, and to a certain extent, but in our day we are coming once more to understand what we are praying for when we say: "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth."

#### SOME TRUTHS FROM THE LESSONS WE HAVE BEEN STUDYING

The sympathies of Jesus were too vast and deep for him to yield, even a little, to the prejudices so prominent in the times when he lived on earth. Sympathy is the remedy for selfishness and prejudice.

The prejudices of the Jews injured both themselves and those whom they despised. Publicans like Matthew and Zacchæus were well worth saving, but they could be saved only through the way in which Jesus dealt with them.

The first Christians had found a new righteousness in Jesus, and this brought about a new sense of brotherhood. There is no brotherhood without righteousness.

The deep sense of brotherhood manifested by the first

Christians was an evidence that their religion was genuine. There is no righteousness without brotherhood.

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Give incidents in the life of Jesus which show that he was free from prejudice.
2. Show that the early Christians overcame race prejudice and social prejudice.
3. What effect did Christianity have on slavery?
4. Why did the early Christians sell their property and put the money in a common fund?
5. What lesson do you learn from the story about President McKinley?
6. In what ways were the early Christians like a family?
7. Why do you think the Early Church grew so rapidly?
8. Name some early philanthropic undertakings of the Church.
9. Tell what you can of teaching in the Early Church.
10. What effect has Christianity had on the condition of children?

### BIBLE VERSES

Ps. 72:1-8; Isa. 11:1-9; Micah. 4:1-4; Mark 10:42-45; Rom. 12:9, 10; I Cor. 15:25; Gal. 6:2; Heb. 13:1-3; I Peter 2:17; I John 3:17; Rev. 12:10-12.

### STUDY TOPICS

1. How Paul Manifested the Spirit of the Christian Family Toward Other Members of the Church. Rom. 16:1, 13, 21; I Tim. 1:1, 2.
2. Manifestations of a Christian Family Spirit in the Epistles of Peter. (Have pupil read the epistles and report on such expressions as "brethren," "brotherhood," "beloved," et cetera.)
3. Manifestations of a Christian Family Spirit in the Epistles of John.
4. Teachings of Jesus Which Hold Up the Christian Family Spirit as an Ideal for Human Relationships. Matt. 5:40-42; 7:1-5; 14:13-21.



5. How We Can Carry the Spirit of the Christian Family into Our School Life. (What should be the attitude of eighth-grade children to the little people of the first grade? Et cetera.)

6. How We Can Carry the Spirit of the Christian Family into Our Church School. The teacher should read about "Sunday-School Mammias" in a book called "Special Days in the Sunday School," by Marion Lawrence, page 32. (After reading the paragraph indicated, the teacher will be able to help the pupil to whom this topic is assigned; or, the book with the passage may be given to the pupil.)

7. How Far Can the Spirit of the Christian Home Be Carried into the Business World? (For the pastor or some adult person who is interested in the Christianization of all business relations.)

8. Manifestations of a Christian Family Spirit Among the Christians of the First Century. (See accounts of collections for poor during famine, et cetera.)

9. How the Christian Home Differs from the Non-Christian Home.

10. A Picture of a Humble Christian Home. (See "The Cotter's Saturday Night," by Burns.)

#### PUTTING THE TRUTHS OF THE LESSON INTO PRACTICE

Dramatize some scene such as "An Evening in a Christian Home." This may be done with, or without spoken words. The father comes home at night. His little daughter brings him his slippers and his newspaper. The children tiptoe about the cradle to avoid waking the baby. They sit down to the evening meal, heads bowed in thanksgiving. Children help mother with dishwashing. Father and little sons play games on the floor. Family worship.

Organize the girls of the class as "Sunday-School Mammias" to care for the little children, each girl to be responsible for one child, seeing that it comes regularly, understands lessons, gets home safely. Organize similar groups with boys.

CHAPTER XXI  
THE EARLY CHURCH IN ITS BATTLE  
WITH EVIL  
WEEK DAY SESSION

“THE GATES OF HADES SHALL NOT PREVAIL  
AGAINST IT”

Matt. 16:13-20; Acts 8:1-4; 12:1-4

We have seen in the preceding chapter that the members of the Early Church were a contented and happy group of people. We must not conclude, however, that they had no hardships and trials. Their periods of unmolested living were brief. The Church from the very first grappled with some enormous and organized evils and the conflict with each of these evils was long and intense, for it was a warfare in which there could be no truce or compromise.

**The Firm Promise of Jesus.** Matt. 16:18. One day on the slopes of Mount Hermon Jesus asked his disciples a question of utmost importance. He said to them, “Who say ye that I am?” Peter replied for the Twelve, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Jesus was made glad by the answer for he knew that faith in him as the Son of God and the Saviour of the world was a matter of the utmost importance to the disciples, the one thing which would keep them true to the great task for which he had been preparing them. He knew that faith in him as God’s Son was the great essential for a Church which should endure when it came into conflict with the mighty forces of evil which were so dominant in the world. This is what he meant when he said, “Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.” The “gates of Hades” means all the forces of evil and destruction. Jesus meant that a Church which believed in him as the Son of God could never be destroyed. The truth of his words is shown in the early days of the Christian Church and in all the centuries of its existence.





DIANA OR CHRIST

**Early Persecutions by the Jewish Leaders.** Acts 4:1-22. It was only a few weeks after the crucifixion of Jesus that the apostles began to preach boldly that Jesus had risen from the dead and that he was the Son of God and the Messiah. The Jewish leaders made an attempt to silence the apostles, as we might expect them to have done. Some of the disciples were seized, brought before the sanhedrin, threatened, beaten, and imprisoned. The leaders, however, manifested little of that fierce determination with which they had pursued Jesus. We are conscious as we read the narratives that they were hesitating and timid in their efforts to silence the disciples. This is surprising when we remember that the same group of men who had secured the crucifixion of Jesus was now trying to suppress the disciples. Annas and Caiaphas were the leaders in this movement against the followers of Jesus as they had been the leaders in the plots against Jesus himself. Why did not these leaders forthwith exterminate the little band of disciples? It was not due to any failure to understand the significance of the gospel message preached by the disciples, for they spoke the message boldly. It was not due to any inability on their part to understand what it meant for them if many people came to believe in the resurrection of Jesus. They had told Pilate, on the evening of the crucifixion, that if people were led to believe that Jesus had risen, "the last error" would be "worse than the first." Their conduct indicates that the events which accompanied the death of Jesus, the darkness and the earthquake, and the evidences that he had, indeed, risen, caused these bad men to hesitate and lose their bravado.

**The Persecution Which Followed the Death of Stephen.** Acts 8:1-3. The timid and half-hearted efforts of Annas and Caiaphas, however, soon gave way to a fearfully severe persecution of the Christians under a new leader. The Jews were roused to a frenzy of rage and apprehension by the bold preaching of Stephen. Having stoned Stephen to death, they turned furiously against the rest of the Christians. A young man named Saul came forward as the leader of the persecution, and he pursued his task with great vigor. He spared neither

men nor women. Invading the homes of the Christians he dragged them away to prison. When the Christians were brought to trial, Saul saw to it that the cases were vigorously prosecuted and he secured a death penalty whenever he could.

This persecution resulted in a distinct advantage to the Church. The Christians were driven in large numbers from Jerusalem into the outskirts of Judea and into Samaria, and even into more distant regions. They carried their faith with them and wherever they went they preached that Jesus was the Saviour of the world. Instead of extinguishing Christianity, the persecution scattered it broadcast over all Palestine and the neighboring regions.

**Local Persecutions Growing Out of Various Causes.** Acts 12:1-4; 16:16-24; 19:23-41. The apostle James lost his life in a brief persecution instigated by Herod Agrippa. This crafty ruler saw that by persecuting the Christians he could curry favor with the Jewish leaders. Being in need of such support, he seized the disciple James and had him put to death. He likewise laid hold on Peter, intending to put him to death after the passover. This persecution was cut short by the untimely death of the wicked king.

Paul and Silas were flogged and imprisoned in Philippi, not because of their Christian teachings primarily, but because in healing a demoniac girl they had taken away the profits which her masters derived from employing the girl as a fortune teller. The Philippians were able to raise a mob by stirring up the race hatred which the Gentiles felt toward the Jews.

When Paul was preaching in Ephesus and meeting with great success, a persecution of the Christians broke out which had its origin in circumstances similar to those which had led to the persecution in Philippi. There was a great temple to Diana in Ephesus and a considerable proportion of the population made their living by making little images of the goddess out of silver or copper. These were sold to multitudes of travelers who came to see the magnificent temple of Diana and to worship at the feet of her colossal statue contained therein. There

was a certain man named Demetrius who saw that the spread of Christianity meant a decreased sale of Diana images. He stirred up his fellow workmen and a riot ensued. Believing that his continued presence in the city would only make matters worse and endanger his fellow Christians among the citizens of Ephesus, Paul left the city.

**The Awful Persecutions by the Romans.** The time came when the Christian Church was face to face with a persecution more severe and far reaching than any we have mentioned. In the early persecutions the Roman authorities were often the protectors of the Christians against their enemies. As Christianity spread through the Roman Empire, the Roman authorities came to understand that this new religion was no mere sect of the Jewish religion, but that it was a powerful force destined to change the institutions of Rome itself, unless it could be destroyed. Divine honors were paid to the Roman Cæsars, but the Christians refused to pay such homage to any man. So the Roman Government, the empire which had conquered the known world and had ruled it for centuries, laid plans utterly to destroy the Christian Church. It is only here and there in the New Testament that these dreadful persecutions by the Romans are mentioned. During the persecution under the Roman Emperor, Nero, Paul was put to death in Rome. It is thought that most of the other disciples gave up their lives for the cause of Christ in some of these Roman persecutions.

#### NERO'S HUMAN TORCHES

The Emperor Nero was a monster in his iniquity. Tradition says that for the sake of seeing a great city on fire he caused the larger part of Rome to be consumed by a great conflagration. While the city burned, he watched it from afar and sought to compose a poem on the burning of Troy under the inspiration of the burning capital of the world. Alarmed at the indignation aroused by the burning of Rome, Nero sought to lay the blame on the Christians. The followers of Jesus were weak in numbers compared with other groups

within the empire. They were hated and despised by both Romans and other Gentiles and by the Jews. So the wicked and crafty emperor saw a chance to lay on the Christians the blame for his own misdeeds.

Nero proclaimed a universal persecution of the Christians. In all the vast stretches of the empire they were to be hunted down like wild beasts and destroyed. In Rome they were thrown into the arena to be devoured by wild beasts. Many were incased in oiled wrappers and lifted on high poles where they were burned as torches to light Nero's gardens at night. The gates of death and destruction were swung wide open against the Church which Jesus had founded in the earth, but they did not prevail against it.

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## SUNDAY SESSION

### THE CHURCH MENACED BY EVILS FROM WITHIN

Acts 5:1-11; 6:1-6; 15:1-29; III John 9-11

In his oration against Catiline, Cicero has an eloquent passage in which he speaks of the dangers which menace the Roman state. He tells the senators that in so far as foreign foes are concerned, Rome has nothing to fear, that all the barbarian nations on the outskirts of Rome's vast territory could not break the power of the city which had become mistress of the world. But he declares that there is a real menace to Rome, and that it lies within her own borders, within the very walls of the city itself. It was so with the Christian Church, in the early centuries, and it is so with the Church to-day. All the forces of evil can never overthrow the Church of Christ, nor can they permanently hinder its progress. But when evils spring up within the Church itself, it is a different matter. We are to learn in this lesson of some of the evils which found an early entrance into the Church and with which the disciples and other Christians of that day had to grapple.

**A Severe Rebuke to Hypocrisy.** Acts 5:1-11. Hypocrisy was the besetting sin of the Pharisees. Jesus had



given his disciples especial warning against this evil, when he told them to beware of "the leaven of the Pharisees." Yet this sin of hypocrisy was one of the first evils to find its way into the company of Christians. Many of the followers of Jesus were selling their property and bringing the money to the disciples that it might be used for the relief of distress among the Christians. A certain man named Ananias and his wife, Sapphira, saw what the others were doing and they knew that the company of Christians looked with favor on such manifestations of generosity. So they conspired to gain the favor of their fellow Church members without giving up all of their possessions. They told the disciples that they had brought all the money they received from the sale of some land, when, in fact, they had kept back a portion of it for themselves. The punishment which came upon these two because they had lied to God was swift. It may seem to us severe, but we must remember that this was an event of momentous importance to the Church. It was like a second fall of man. If the spirit of deceit and hypocrisy should have become general in the Church at that time, it would have meant the destruction of the cause of Christ.

**Jealousy and Race Prejudice Cause Threatened Divisions.** Acts 6:1-6.

It is the goal of Christianity to do away with all enmity and prejudice which spring from the fact that peoples speak languages which differ one from the other, but the goal of the Christian religion is not always attained at once, and even when once attained it is not always maintained consistently and permanently. On the day of Pentecost the different types of Jews who had become Christians were molded into one brotherhood by a new and profound religious experience. As time passed, however, the Palestinian Jews and the Grecian Jews found that they were still very unlike in some respects. Old dislikes began to grow again. The Grecian Jews began to say among themselves that the funds which belonged to the Church were not fairly distributed, that their widows were not receiving so large a share as the widows among the Palestinian Jews. Such

misunderstandings are very apt to arise with regard to money matters. The plan of having all things common was one which would not work unless there was a very large and permanent sense of brotherhood among the Christians. We have already seen how ably the apostles handled this delicate problem. The incident shows us how careful we ought to be in carrying on the work of the Church, especially in matters which have to do with money.

**A Great Controversy Which Threatened to Wreck the Early Church. Acts 15:1-29.**

The unity of the Church was menaced in its early years by a controversy about the conditions under which Gentiles might become Christians. Most of the Jews who had become Christians held that Gentiles who wished to become Christians must keep the Jewish laws regarding certain religious ceremonials. In effect they required the Gentiles to become Jewish proselytes before they should be admitted to the fellowship of the Christian Church. There were some Christians who did not believe that anything besides a faith in Jesus as God's Son ought to be required of Gentile converts. The matter under dispute was indeed of utmost importance. If the narrow interpretation should prevail, it meant that Christianity was only a type of the Jewish religion. If the wider interpretation should prevail, it meant that Christianity was a new religion fitted to become world-wide in its dominion over the hearts and minds of men. Jesus had foreseen this problem and had warned his followers against trying to put the new wine of his teachings into the old wine skins of the Jewish forms and rituals. He had told them that his religion was to be something more than a new patch on an old garment. The story of the great conference held at Jerusalem to settle this question is interestingly told in the fifteenth chapter of The Acts.

**Unworthy Personal Ambitions Lead to Divisions and to False Teachings. III John 9-11.** The Apostle John, in one of his letters to a friend, says some plain things about a certain man named Diotrephes. This Diotrephes was a man selfishly and unworthily ambitious. John

says that he loved "to have the preëminence." The goal of Diotrephes was not to exalt Jesus and to help establish his Kingdom in the world, but to gain for himself a place of prominence. When a person of this type of character gets into a church, there is no end of trouble. Such persons have been responsible for many of the divisions of the Church. The kind of egotism which Diotrephes possessed has been the real source of many disastrous errors which have hindered the advance of Christ's Kingdom. John was a Christian of wonderful tenderness, but he grows stern as he thinks of this trouble maker in a distant city who is dividing a church into opposing factions and defeating the cause for which Jesus gave up his life; and all because he cannot be the big man of the church and have his own way all the time. Have you ever seen a Diotrephes in a church or in a young people's organization?

**The Letters to the Seven Churches.** Rev., chs. 2, 3. We can learn a great deal about the internal dangers which menaced the Early Church by reading what is said to the seven churches in the early chapters of Revelation. Some of these churches had left their "first love," that is they had lost the glow of enthusiasm under the inspiration of which they had been organized. Some were disturbed by false teachings. Some had fallen back into pagan ways of life. At least one of the seven was a church of wealthy people which had become self-satisfied and lukewarm. It had lost the spirit of service. These dangers which menaced the Early Church are to be found within the Church of our own day. That is why the New Testament is still the best guide for those who have banded themselves together to establish Christ's Kingdom in all the earth.

#### PHILIP SCHUYLER AND BENEDICT ARNOLD

The difference between loyalty to a great cause and disloyalty to it is strikingly manifest in the lives of two American generals in the Revolutionary War. General Philip Schuyler was in charge of the American forces which were resisting General Burgoyne as he marched south from Canada by way of Lake Champlain. The

American army was small and could not at first hope to meet the strong British force in open battle. General Schuyler hindered the march of the British by attacking any detached force and by destroying the roads and bridges. As the conflict went on, the American army grew stronger through the arrival of new troops. The position of the British grew more difficult as the distance from their base of supplies grew longer and they failed to win a decisive victory. General Schuyler saw that the time was coming for a decisive effort. He laid his plans carefully and with tireless energy gathered every possible force for the conflict. The night before the day set for the supreme effort of the Americans, messengers from the Continental Congress came into General Schuyler's tent and told him that he was relieved of the command of the American forces.

The motive lying back of the dismissal of General Schuyler was largely jealousy on the part of certain officers who thought that they ought to be in command and who had influence in Congress. General Schuyler was disappointed, of course, but he was too much interested in the success of the American cause to be disloyal, even though he had suffered injustice. He immediately laid all his plans before his successor and promised him every possible aid. The battle was won and the victory was due to the plans and labors of General Schuyler, but another officer gained the credit for the victory.

It was not very long after this that another American general, Benedict Arnold, was deprived of his command in much the same way. General Arnold at once began to plan for revenge. He entered into communication with the British. Having secured the command of West Point, he agreed with the British to surrender it. When his plots were discovered, he went over to the British side and fought against his fellow countrymen in a most brutal way, burning and destroying property and putting to death Americans who had surrendered under promise of protection. General Arnold's life was so self-centered that he was not capable of that high kind of loyalty which General Schuyler manifested.

## THE LESSON PRAYER

Teach us, our Father in heaven, to understand the lessons we have studied in this book. Give us a sense of gratitude to thee for all the blessings thou hast given us through the Church. Help us to be loyal to thee and to Jesus thy Son. Hasten the day when all the earth shall know the truth as it is revealed in the Bible. We would do our part in bringing to pass the day of brotherhood for all races and peoples. Give us patience and perseverance in the tasks of to-day that we may be ready for greater tasks to-morrow. We ask for Jesus' sake. Amen.

## THE LESSON HYMN

"Sunset and Evening Star." "Studies of Familiar Hymns," page 263.

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## EXPRESSIONAL SESSION

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A LOYAL CHURCH  
MEMBER

II Tim. 2:15; I Cor. 16:2; Jude 3

In order that the Church may accomplish its mission, Church members must have the kind of loyalty which General Schuyler manifested. A Church member ought to be so loyal to the cause of Christ that even unjust removal from a place of responsibility and prominence would make no difference in his devotion to the cause for which the Church is contending. A genuine loyalty to the Church will manifest itself in the life of the Church member by certain well-nigh infallible signs.

1. **A Diligent Worker.** II Tim. 2:15. Those members of a Church which are busy with the tasks of the Church are usually the most loyal people in the organization. Selfish people like Diotrefes may be very busy for a time in the affairs of the Church, but sooner or later something happens which is in the nature of a test and they drop everything forthwith. Those who really present themselves "approved unto God," and who are workmen who need not be ashamed, are filled with a spirit of loyalty to Jesus and to his Church.

2. **A Generous Giver.** I Cor. 16:2. A loyal citizen of any nation will not refuse to pay his rightful share of the taxes necessary for the support of the nation. Money has been called "the acid test" of religion and it reveals nothing more clearly than the fundamental loyalty or disloyalty of the professed follower of Christ. Anyone who will not give as liberally as possible for the upbuilding of the Church, and for the relief of those in distress, is wanting in loyalty to Christ and his cause.

3. **A Courageous Defender.** Jude 3. It took great courage and genuine loyalty to be a first-century Christian. The quality of courage is still needed if one is to be a worth-while Christian. A deep loyalty to Christ and his Church will help to give a professed Christian the courage to speak in defense of the Church in any company where it is maligned.

#### SOME TRUTHS FROM THE LESSONS WE HAVE BEEN STUDYING

Loyalty is an element in the rock on which Jesus has built the unconquerable Church. There was deep loyalty in Peter's noble words, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

Loyalty gives courageous strength of character. It was one of the most prominent characteristics of those early Christians who endured such bitter persecutions.

The Jewish leaders claimed to be very loyal to Moses and his teachings. In reality, they were too selfish to be truly loyal to anyone but themselves.

Demetrius and his craftsmen pretended to be very loyal to Diana when they were really only afraid that Christianity would interfere with their profits. Selfishness often parades under the guise of loyalty.

The Christians were accused of disloyalty to Rome because they refused to worship Cæsar. They refused to worship Cæsar because they were loyal to Christ.

Ananias and Sapphira were disloyal to the Church when they tried to deceive the apostles and gain a popularity which they had not earned.

The Council of Jerusalem was able to settle a grave dispute because most of the early Christians were loyal to Jesus, however they might differ with one another. Diotrophes was so selfish that he was disloyal to the disciples, to the Church, and to the cause of Christ.

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What two types of danger menaced the early Church?
2. What did Jesus mean when he said, "Upon this rock I will build my church"?
3. Tell of the early persecutions of the Christians.
4. Why did not Caiaphas and Annas destroy all the disciples of Jesus and so bring the Christian religion to an end?
5. Name some of the causes which led to some of the briefer persecutions.
6. Tell of the persecutions under the Romans.
7. What dangers menaced the Early Church from within its own membership?
8. Tell of the council of Jerusalem and its decisions.
9. What was the condition of the Early Church as revealed in the early chapters of Revelation?
10. What lessons concerning loyalty do you learn from the story about Philip Schuyler and Benedict Arnold?

### BIBLE VERSES

Ruth 1:16, 17; Mark 8:34; Luke 14:26; Rom. 1:16, 31 ("covenant-breakers" means in the Greek, "without loyalty"); I Cor. 10:32; 11:22; 15:9; Col. 1:18; Eph. 5:25-27.

### STUDY TOPICS

1. Ruth's Loyalty to Her Mother-in-Law. Ruth, ch. 1.
2. Paul's Loyalties. I. To His Native City. Acts 21:39. II. To His Friends. Rom., ch. 16. III. To Christ. I Cor. 2:2.
3. Loyalty to Christ and the Church as a Test of True Discipleship. John 6:60-71.

4. Ways in Which We Can Show Our Loyalty to the Church.

5. A Study of the Third Epistle of John. (Compare the characteristics of the three men mentioned, Gaius, Diotrophes, and Demetrius, with a view to showing the difference in loyalty which each manifested.)

6. Jude's Condemnation of Disloyal Church Members in His Day. Jude 11-13.

7. Why Loyalty Is So Important in the Nation and in the Church.

8. Ways in Which Intermediate Pupils Can Show Their Loyalty to the Pastor of the Church.

9. Ways in Which Intermediate Pupils Can Help Develop Loyalty to the Church School.

10. The Folly of Trying to Maintain a Divided Loyalty. Matt. 6:19-24.

#### PUTTING THE TRUTHS OF THE LESSON INTO PRACTICE

Suggested pledge of loyalty to be signed by the pupils of the class:

"We pledge our loyal support to Jesus Christ and his Church. We will seek to manifest our loyalty to Christ and his Church by diligence in the tasks which are assigned to us and by giving as largely as we can for the building of Christ's Kingdom in the world. We pledge our loyal support to the pastor of our church. We will assist him all we can in the work which he is carrying on as God's minister to the church and congregation. We pledge our loyalty to the church school and to all its officers and teachers. We will do all that we can to help make the school a success and to bring others into its membership."









